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POLITICS OF THE PRESENT, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC.

BY THE EDITOR.

It is eleven years since the Peace established by Waterloo was broken, and the irritability which had been pretty well pent up during the preceding thirty-three years within the separate bodies-politic of Europe again broke forth in insurrections and wars. This fact, that we are now in the twelfth year of a new period of war and commotion, succeeding a period of comparative peace, ought to be distinctly borne in mind. Eleven years of the period have passed; but, according to all probability, many more years will have to elapse before the period shall have reached its historical close.

What meant such an epidemic of political irritability throughout Europe eleven years ago but that certain wrongs or mal-arrangements, of which the nations had been complaining since the so-called general adjustment of 1815, were now felt in such accumulated degree as no longer to be endurable? The wrongs openly complained of were of two kinds—wrong as between certain peoples and their own proper governments; and wrong as respected the way in which certain peoples were parceled out among governments not their own. Of the feeling of one or other of these kinds of wrong, or of the two united, the well-remembered events of 1848-9 were an emphatic proclamation. The Parisian revolt against Louis-Philippe, and all the simultaneous reckonings to which that

rapid French movement gave occasion between the populations of the Italian and German states and their respective sovereigns, were risings of the subject for an increase of liberty. The Hungarian war, after its first stage, on the other hand, the contemporary war in Italy for the expulsion of the Austrians, and the tumults among the Slavonian populations subject to Austria, were commotions having their root in the sense of outraged nationality, in the loathing of certain races and certain parts of the earth for alien governments tied over them by force. Through what course these agitations, in their double kind, ran, and what immediately came of them, who is there that forgets? To the first triumphant rush of democratic effort and of the enthusiasm of nationalities, there succeeded the gradual tyrannic reaction; the Constitutions granted by the sovereigns were torn in pieces or blown back as cartridge-paper in the faces of the mobs; the insurgent nationalities were lashed down and rechained; and, save for the incidents of a Piedmont happily rescued from the waves and not disposed to sink again, and a Prussia constitutionalized a little more than formerly, the only result on which the popular eye could rest as the positive and tangible issue of so much turmoil was the unexpected appearance in the centre of European affairs of one most extraordinary man, long vagrant in the

outer spaces of the world as a fragment of the old Napoleon, but now restored to his uncle's place, with his Napoleonic ideas all within him, and with a system of ethics such as belongs only to exiles that have been purple-born.

Say what we will, the appearance in the centre of affairs of this one man—whom some eccentric persons persist in regarding as stupid, but whom others have uniformly praised, since his success, as wise and profound,—is the most pregnant fact in recent European history. How it modifies, for one thing, the notion with which some philosophers have been recently entertaining us, that the importance of the individual in society is necessarily becoming less and less! Louis-Napoleon, it is true, can only act as all the circumstances about him admit of his acting, and the drift of affairs on a large average might be much the same without him as with him; but, in the present state of Europe, his will is undoubtedly one of the main elements that have to be taken into account, and the influence which he personally exerts tells immediately over as large a surface of the earth as was ever reached from Paris before. Even in the general confusion of 1848-9, and while he was but President of the French Republic, his influence was perceptible. It has been more perceptible, however, in what has occurred since. First, in his own self-arranged rise from the Presidency to the Empire, and in his firm possession of the Empire on the terms of his own dictation, he has perplexed previous ideas as to modes of government, by showing to the world that, after all, Dynastic Despotism and Representative Constitutionalism are not, as has been supposed, the only alternatives that human ingenuity can work out at present in this department of experiment—by exhibiting at least one successful example of the art of founding a personal despotism, even in a highly sensitive and civilized country, upon an instantaneous or vanishing basis of Universal Suffrage, and so suggesting to the reflective that, were the process repeated along a line of successors not necessarily related

to each other, there might be a revival, or a modification, for certain countries, of the rule of the Roman Caesars. How powerfully Louis-Napoleon's dealings with his French constituency have affected the speculative politics of the present, may be seen in the fact that, on the one hand, the partisans of Despotism have been looking less askance of late at Universal Suffrage, as on something long unnecessarily dreaded, and now seen to be capable, in certain cases, of useful employment, and that, on the other hand, liberal and popular thinkers, formerly advocates of Universal Suffrage pure and simple, have felt themselves knocked back in their enthusiasm, and have begun to re-investigate for correctives and limitations. But Louis-Napoleon's influence has not been confined to such action on speculative politics in virtue of what he has done in France. As he has been a bold man, a man of new methods, within his own constituency, so he has been a bold man, a man of new methods, in his dealings with other nations. Twice or thrice, Great Britain, incapable of penetrating his meaning, but knowing that he is not a man of the old calculable kind, has fancied that the immense forces he was accumulating in France, and which must have some outlet, were destined for her shores. Among the continental nations round France there has been the trepidation of a like uncertainty. Twice, relieving this general anxiety as to the direction his will might take, he *has* acted, and acted characteristically. It is in the East of Europe, where national masses have not yet been formed, as in the West, but where Austria and Turkey hold between them provisionally a medley of races, tugged at by the huge Slavonic power of Russia, and otherwise agitated by instincts of their own—it is there that the question of nationality is both most rife and most difficult. Into this region the genius of Napoleon III. took its first aggressive walk. Russia, tired of merely tugging at the medley of masterless or ill-mastered races within her view, and thinking the time come for more decisive interference, invaded the Turkish part

of them, intending to cashier the sick Turk, and to help herself to his Slavonian provinces and to whatever else might be convenient, while satisfying other great powers by leaving the rest at their discretion. The great powers did not like the project; France and England, allying themselves, declared a war of the balance of power; and, at a vast cost, Russia was obliged to desist, and the question of the future of the populations subject to the Turk was reserved, with a little temporary adjustment, for another solution. In the making of the peace with Russia, however, France had a greater share than England; and it has since appeared that, though the French Emperor fought that war with Russia, there has been such intercourse between Paris and St. Petersburg as to bring him and the Russian government to a better understanding of their respective parts. For lo! the second Napoleonic stroke in the common politics of Europe! The scene now is Italy—that country whose unhappy pre-eminence it is to have offered for so long the spectacle at once of native despotism and bad government in their worst conceivable forms and of the bitterest agony under foreign rule. Undertaking, after an ominous pause, one part of the Italian problem, the French Emperor threw his armies into the Austrian portion of the peninsula. Russia, it is understood, having her own views on Austria, acquiesced. But, within a few weeks, the enterprise was bursting the bounds that its promoters had hoped to set to it. Accordingly through Europe flew the news that the war was stopped. Putting in practice what is also one of his peculiar methods, borrowed from his uncle's book—that of settling affairs by private interviews of crowned heads—the French Emperor had arranged his differences with the young Austrian Emperor at a personal conference. Since then the Italians have been doing their best to wind up the unfinished business as satisfactorily for themselves as the state of the case will permit, and with no more reference to the treaty between the two Emperors than they have been

obliged to pay to an ideal arrangement hung up half-formed in the air above them.

Such has been the course of European events during the last eleven years; on the fringe of such a continental state of things as the attained result, does Great Britain now stand. The important consideration, we repeat, is that all is not yet over—and this not in the ordinary sense which implies that there never is rest in human affairs, but in a sense more special. Nothing is in a state which, even by a figure of speech, can be called permanent; all is glaringly out of equilibrium. The man who has done so much already is still in his cabinet in Paris, inscrutable as ever, twirling his moustache, and thinking what he shall do next. Even should he disappear, France is now such, in virtue of what he has done in her, that she cannot settle herself without a shock. Since 1789 France may be said to have declared herself done with government by dynasties; and the French enthusiasm for the name of Napoleon will hardly extend itself, through such competition as is likely to be, to a third generation. Moreover, the European questions, the statement of which caused the convulsion in which Louis-Napoleon rose, are still balked of a settlement. Populations that made a start for constitutional government eleven years ago, and failed, are ready, on opportunity, to start again. The principle of nationality, laughed at as a pedantry by some in our part of Europe, beats in the very blood and brain of other parts, so that armies are required to watch its pulsations. Italy may be patched, and patched; but all the patching that Congresses can devise will not smother, it seems, her passion for unity. It is not in the nature of things that the East of Europe can long remain as it is, an amorphous mass of struggling religions and races—one set leashed together by a Germanic knot and called Austria; another held more loosely in the clutches of the degenerate Turk; the whole with a bit of independent Greece for its Mediterranean tip, and a huge yellow Russia for its northern

butt-end. The theory already in possession of the field for the organization of this chaos is that theory of Panslavism of which we have lately heard so much, which our practical little men of the West are also accustomed to deride, but which will awaken them some day with a vengeance. It is the Russian version of that theory that is now alone active; for the present all is quiet; but we shall soon hear more of it.

Britain must make *herself* safe. That is the first duty. There must be a navy sufficient to ride round and round her, to keep the silver seas clear between her and the rest of the world, and to maintain her guard over her scattered dependencies. Her coasts must have the means of ample defence. Her population must be inferior to no other nation in the best and most approved gymnastic of arms. There is no end to the self-sophistication of even the most able and most honest men on any subject whatever; but surely there is no greater infatuation than that which would oppose the universal desire of the country to see itself insured to the utmost amount of contemporary risk, and which, not hesitating to call Wellington a dotard for having given it sorrowfully as his dying opinion that an invasion of this island was a military possibility, or to call Lyndhurst foolish for accepting that opinion, or to make fun of past panics of invasion because it is eight centuries since an invasion actually succeeded, reserves all its denunciations of the war-spirit for our own modest and healthy efforts at defensive soldiering in our own fields, and proposes as a better safeguard the habit of speaking soft of the very men abroad who practise this iniquity on the largest scale, and walk in war and bloodshed.

But Britain cannot lie like a log on the waters, contented to be secure herself, and regardless of what happens on all the earth besides. A man, it has been said, lives not only in the spot which he personally occupies, but in every spot to which he may extend his action, or to which he may conceive it possible that his action should be ex-

tended. And so, wherever over the world British influence penetrates, or can conceive itself penetrating, there, and not in the mere islands where we have our footing, Great Britain lives.

In one thing, indeed, the men of the Peace-party are conspicuously right. As a large portion of the business of every man consists in keeping clear of business with which he has no concern, or which he cannot efficiently undertake—as every tolerably busy man has to spend a considerable part of his time in actually avoiding engagements in which others wish to involve him, and in some of which he would like to involve himself, if he thought any good could come of it—so perhaps the most important part of Britain's work may be in judiciously abstaining from meddling with what she cannot mend. Where Britain cannot act characteristically, and according to her own views of what is right, there she had better not act at all.

At all times, however, and in every emergency as it rises, there is one duty which Britain may systematically perform, whether active interference seems desirable or not—the duty of vigilant observation, and of honest and open criticism. At the present time especially the world is entitled to look to Great Britain for the efficient performance of this kind of service. Chaucer, in one of his poems, fancies a definite place, or focal point in the universe, called the House of Fame, where all the sounds from all the regions of the world meet and commingle, and where Fame, enthroned amid the roar of rumours, listens judicially to all, and blows back in response her blasts of praise or blame. England is at present this House of Fame for Europe—the one land where all reports may meet and none needs be stifled, where all facts and characters can be discussed in all ways, and where the trumpets of praise and blame can be freely blown. England may perform an inestimable service to the other nations by realizing this obvious fact about herself, and by maintaining, through her Press, a steady and courageous play of English public opinion upon European

potentates and their acts. It is difficult to limit the good that may be done, or that has been done already, by this fulfilment from our land of our independent insular verdicts on what passes abroad.

But we are not restricted to this kind of service, powerful as it may be. England is not merely a House of Rumours annexed to the rest of Europe for the reception and free discussion of all the news that may be brought to it from the adjacent regions of action—not merely a separate condenser fitted up at a sufficient distance from the rest of the machine for a continued service of speculation and talk. England is a powerful nation, a member of the commonwealth of nations, represented everywhere by ambassadors and ministers, and actually, through them, at every moment contributing for better or worse her advices on European emergencies as they successively arise. Every week there go despatches from our Foreign Office, committing us as a nation to some opinion on some international question, and to some course of policy affecting the interests of myriads of fellow-men whom our eyes shall never behold. Here then is a second form of international service which we actually do perform, through our Diplomacy, and which we may perform well or ill. Lastly, beyond this, and as a service of the last resort, not to be used except in great and rare exigencies—but the abnegation of which altogether would be to render all else without effect and to announce ourselves to the world as a passive crowd of insular lecturers—there is the exertion of our power to enforce our views. To decide the moment when this final mode of service shall be resorted to is the extreme responsibility of statesmanship, a question of combined principle and prudence so terrible and so complex, that perhaps it is well that we should have among us men whose eternal argument it is that it need never be resorted to at all. It may have to be resorted to in self-defence, when our own possessions or our own liberties are attacked; but even in this case, there may be dif-

ferences of opinion—some maintaining that it will be time enough to arm when Philip is at our gates, others being ready to stir whenever Boeotia shall have been overrun, and others of farther glance holding, with the orator of old, that that man whose whole course of action is antagonistic to us and our interests, and who is drawing nearer and nearer in his antagonism, is already our enemy, wherever he may be. Of all conceivable cases in which self-defence to the last extremity might be considered lawful, that one is least to be questioned in which the instinct of self-defence would coincide with the determination to preserve for England her right to be still an open House of Rumours wherein shall be performed for Europe, if no other service, at least the faithful service of free discussion. A blow at the appendages of our Empire were nothing so fatal as a blow at this liberty of our heart; and it is creditable to the sentiment of our common people that, at an instant when danger threatened, they would not even hear plausible reasoning on such a subject, but declared their decision at once, and even felled an otherwise popular government that there might be no mistake. There is far less likelihood, despite the precedent of the Russian war, of a positive exertion of our strength in a cause not obviously and immediately our own. There may possibly, however, be occasions of this kind—occasions when either in a general conflict between organized Despotism and Liberty we should see ourselves compelled to take a part, or when some intolerable outrage of the fundamental principles of human society should bring us armed to the spot of the wrong. Were there a massacre of Christians in any Mohammedan part of the earth, we should make short work of the principle of non-interference; and to this day it is a proof how strongly prudence and a calculation of all the chances may operate to restrain from an act which common humanity might long to perform, that the late Government of Naples—a government characterized by Mr. Gladstone as “a systematic negation of the

idea of God"—should have subsisted so long untouched and impudent within the range of British and American guns.

In all the three kinds of service which Britain may perform in her relations to the rest of Europe at the present time—whether the general and systematic service of discussion and criticism, or the constant official service of diplomatic advice, or the rarer and extreme service of active interference—the first and most essential rule is that she should act characteristically, that she should be true to herself :

This above all, — to thine own self be true ;

And it must follow, as the night the day,

Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Substitute nation for individual, and the maxim still holds. Whatever good Britain can do must be done by being true to herself—to her own principles, her own acquired convictions, even to what she and the world may regard as her peculiarities. Now, were an Englishman himself, or were a foreigner for him, to try to express generally in a few terms the distinctive characteristics of England, what else could he say but something to this effect—that England is a country of free institutions, Protestant in respect of religion, and mainly of the Anglo-Saxon branch of the Gothic race ! Her compacted system of civil liberty, her Protestantism, and her Gothic descent and affinities—these are at least three facts or elements in her history and constitution. To a great extent, they are identical. It is in the Protestant nations that civil liberty has been realized in fullest degree ; Protestantism, rightly understood, is but a name for the spirit of liberty ; and the only nations in which Protestantism has succeeded have been those of the Gothic group—which nations, indeed, always had been, in a manner, Protestant. But let each characteristic stand apart, and out of each there might come a rule determining, not indeed the exact conduct of Britain in every combination of circumstances,

but the general scope of her conduct in all circumstances, if she is to be true to herself. That nation is unworthy the name of a nation which is not prepared to assert internationally what she is and holds by internally. Free herself, Britain is bound to extend her sympathies to every manifestation in other lands of the spirit of liberty, to make liberty the object of her search, her anxiety, her reverence. Save for the presence among us of a few perverse spirits, who blaspheme our Liberty while they are eating its bread, and are clothed by its purchases, and protected in their very gabble by its shelter—a few passionless souls who sneer at that in the present which comes nearest, in aim and in promise, to what we all venerate in our own past—we have been true perhaps, within merely sentimental limits, to our own traditions of freedom in our judgments of recent continental events. We have not been so true to our Protestantism. Had we been so, then surely, regarding it as one of our own greatest advantages to have emancipated ourselves and all our concerns long ago from the notion of any duty of allegiance to a pontiff stationed in central Italy, and professing to be the one authorized button connecting earth and heaven, we should have welcomed, as supremely interesting, any spontaneous signs of a tendency, in still Papal parts of the earth, to follow our example, or (which might be equivalent) any efforts in those parts to reduce the Papacy to a purely spiritual power dependent thenceforth on its own merits. How far contrary the fact has been may be felt by those who remember that in 1849 our ambassador in Paris was instructed to state to the French Government, then fitting out the expedition for Rome, that the object of that expedition—the restoration of the Pope to the sovereignty from which his own subjects had deposed him—was also the desire of her Britannic Majesty's Government. We did not *help* the French to do it ; but the atrocious blunder of our approbation of their act in doing it stands recorded in our Blue Books ; and we have been paying the penalty ever since. Fidelity

to our professed Protestantism, at least to the avoidance of any similar good office to the Papacy in future, should it again spontaneously tumble, may surely be written down in our note-books as a pretty sound rule of action. What rule is to be derived out of the recollection of our Anglo-Saxon descent and our Germanic affinities, over and above what may be involved in the preceding, is a matter of more vague speculation, but might be worth a thought. Race, in practical politics, must go for little. France, with which we do not account our connexion by race so great as with some other countries, is yet more closely connected with us than any other, by neighbourhood, by historical tradition, and by the respect which we owe to a people so superlative in talent, and so powerful for good or evil; nor, when we look to Russia and the Slavonian east, is any bugbear of Pan Slavism or of Russian aggression to prevent our doing justice to the efforts of that extensive mass of peoples in material and moral civilization, and to their capabilities in the commerce of Europe. It is conceivable, however, that a juncture might arise in which we might find ourselves acting most naturally and most beneficially in alliance with the nations of our own Gothic and Protestant group; and, even as matters are, there is nothing for which a British statesman would deserve more vehement reprobation than for promoting a quarrel, on almost any ground whatever, between Britain and the great American Republic.

While a resolution to act characteristically and truly to herself might serve as a very good general law of conduct to Britain in her international relations, and might be found more available even in particular difficulties than professional politicians suppose, there might be farther guidance in the possession of distinct views and conclusions on the questions most pressing and most likely to recur. To engage in any business without definite views as to the conclusions to which it is desirable to bring it, is as if a man were to plunge into a fog,

and feel his way in it laboriously, without minding whether he emerged at the spot where he entered, or at the right or left, or at the opposite and proper end. Our politicians, in dealing with foreign questions, have too often acted after this fashion. In almost every question of politics, the politician may obtain some light, in addition to what he may have in his own character and abstract notions of right, by distinctly considering two things—the *tendency* of affairs, or the direction in which they are going, whether he will or not; and the *expediency* of this or that proposed measure, or its probable effect for good on the material and moral condition of the greatest number implicated. He who opposes a tendency, when he might be working with it, loses his time; and he who has not the wellbeing of the largest and most helpless portion of the human race always before him, and who does not test every proposed measure as well as he can by reference to that object, lacks the very soul of a statesman. Now, there are questions of the present day on which it is quite possible to be helped to a conclusion by both these lights at once. It is impossible for any well-informed person, for example—let him value the abstract doctrine of Nationality never so lightly—to come to any other conclusion than that Italy tends to be an independent nation, and that it is desirable for Europe that she should be such. And so, with respect to the East of Europe, without assigning too much importance to considerations of race, without denying that what are called nations have been and may be very factitious things, it is possible to note tendencies to consolidation which have nature in their favour, and in fostering which we should be rousing rich lands to the full consciousness of their capabilities, and opening them to the commerce of the world.

After all, we shall best fulfil the most essential part of our duty to the rest of the world by attending diligently to our own affairs. Within the limits of our own British islands, and much

more within the limits of our varied and ocean-dislocated Empire, there are perpetually rising new difficulties and wants, craving the attention of whatever wisdom or authority may be nearest the spots where they rise, and also, in the last resort, of the collective wisdom and authority concentrated in Westminster. The application of social wisdom and ingenuity, through whatever organ, to the needs and uses of the community as they successively arise—this constitutes our Home Politics. Under this name, however, are usually comprehended only those questions which, from their nature, do not admit of being locally settled, but must be directly or indirectly referred to head-quarters.

It is said, indeed, that such questions are becoming rarer and rarer, and that ultimately the sole office of a central government will be that of a police preventing injustice between man and man, and so allowing free scope to individual action and to joint-stock enterprise; but even those who maintain that such a time is coming, do not say that it has come yet, but allow that there still remains for Government much deliberative business, if only in studying how to remove the restrictions, in the shape of past laws and institutions, by which individual action and the right of co-operation are still clogged. Others go farther, and maintain that, even should society ever reach the prophesied period when all shall be done by absolutely free individual action, coagulating into joint-stock enterprise, Government would still emerge again in a positive form as the systematized Art of Joint-stock Enterprise; and so that even now, in this time of preliminary confusion, Government, besides its negative service of protection and the removal of restrictions, may assume the positive service of directing the co-operative tendency, indicating objects for it, and even provisionally doing some of its work. The difference may seem one of speculation; but it pervades our practical politics through and through, giving rise to discussions concerning Centralization and Local Government,

and obviously distinguishing our statesmen into two classes—those who regard Government chiefly as a machinery for making new laws and institutions, and those who regard it rather as a machinery for removing old ones. For many years our most powerful and popular, perhaps also our most useful, politicians, have been of the latter class, destructive rather than constructive.

Whichever notion is entertained as to the true business of Government, there is no substantial difference anywhere among us as to the method by which the business must be performed. Ours is and has been for centuries a Government on the system of Representation. The greatness of Britain, its very existence, is identified with its representative or Parliamentary Constitution. True, in our House of Peers we have a part of our Constitution nominally not representative—a traditional and undissolved fragment of that older system in which a certain number of individuals in the community claimed the right of government as inhering in their own persons by their birth and position. True also there are different degrees of affection among us for that system of Representation of which we boast as our national possession, and different estimates of its sufficiency for all the work that is now or may soon be required of it. The word has gone forth lately from some among us that Representative Institutions are on their trial; and there have been actual proposals in certain quarters of various measures that would modify somewhat the representative character of our system, or at least strengthen the personal and permanent element lying at the back of it—an extended use of Acts of Council, for example, or the admission to seats in Parliament of a limited number of nominees of the Crown or of the chief minister. The difference in this respect will be found to depend on the views taken by the different sets of persons as to what is to be expected from Government. Those who regard it as the function of Government to be on the outlook for all social difficulties, and to provide positive solutions for them in the

shape of laws and new arrangements, tend naturally to such a modification of the representative system as would bring into play the experience and the inventiveness of individual statesmen; whereas those who regard Government mainly as an agency for the removal of old laws and restrictions, and think all the bustle of a Parliamentary session well bestowed if one or two restrictions are swept away by it, have no thoughts of a limitation of the Representative System, but would give all their energies to its farther development. Despite these different tendencies of opinion, however, all are convinced that, as Britain has lived by her representative institutions hitherto, so she must live by them for the future, clinging to them with such tenacity that no domestic revolution shall rack them out of her, and they shall yield to nothing short of a foreign conquest. Nay, more, all parties are at the present moment agreed that the basis of our representative system as established in 1832 is no longer adequate for our national purposes, and that a new measure is necessary which, besides other changes in our electoral arrangements, shall sound depths in our national being that have not yet been reached, and admit a far larger proportion of our population to the franchise of full citizenship.

As hesitations respecting the expediency of a measure for the extension of the suffrage have now pretty well ceased among us, so also, we think, ought some of our hesitations respecting the exact depth down among the yet unfranchised which the measure ought to reach. There are, indeed, questions worth discussion and now being discussed, as to the necessity of still, for a time, excluding some portion of the community, supposed to be unfit for the immediate exercise of the suffrage, and of using the right of the suffrage, as regards *them*, rather as something to be held temptingly over their heads, for their own good, for the purpose of attracting them up to a certain easy mark of qualification, than as a privilege already due to them. There are questions, also, more delicate and difficult, as to the possibility of a gradu-

ated system of suffrage, whereby the more fit, according to certain standards, shall have larger voting power in proportion. Saving these questions, however, it may be asserted that, the more full and thorough any Reform Bill is, in respect of the extension of the suffrage which it proposes, the better. Not that extended suffrage, not that universal suffrage, will, or can of itself, yield to any nation the great positive result of good government. When all the individuals in the nation shall have votes, the ways and means of good government will be as much to seek as ever. It is, indeed, one of the best reasons for extending the suffrage as soon as may be to the uttermost, that exaggerated ideas of the benefits to be derived from such an extension will thereby be extinguished, and that, finding by actual experience that good government does not consist in this, and cannot come out of this alone, people will have their minds more free for inquiring in what else it does consist, and out of what else it is likely to come. The great argument for complete popular representation is, that till we have it we shall never be at rest about it. When this is ceded, then at least one long cause of discontent and of discord between different classes will have been removed; the limit will have been reached beyond which it will be impossible to go in that direction; and the strength of the community, instead of being wasted to a great extent, as hitherto, in mere tossing of arms, mere clamour, and mutual struggle between franchised and unfranchised, will be all available for whatever real business may be on hand.

While Parliamentary Reform, and its related questions of Ballot, Payment of Members, and the like, are the questions of home politics now most conspicuous on the board, other classes of questions are likewise presenting themselves. In Colonial administration, properly so called, nothing of much interest is at present under discussion; our compelled assent to the principle of Colonial self-government having rid us of such questions of this class as might other-

wise have been continually recurring. There is, however, the imperial question of India—a question likely to task all our ingenuity and all our energies for many a day to come. Nor must we forget, among our immediate home-questions, an important class of which we are likely to hear more and more, as stock political questions of Parliamentary Reform, &c. are disposed of and laid to sleep—those questions, we mean, of which the recent strikes have been at once an illustration and an announcement. Political Economy is the particular science of those social phenomena which relate to the acquisition of wealth; Politics is the general and more comprehensive science of social exigencies; and there is no order of questions more really pressing than those, little regarded at present, which lie athwart these two sciences, and will have to be settled between them.

Ever at the end of the list, as still unsettled and still far from any probability of settlement, comes the question of the means of National Education. On this head, it has always appeared to us, that it would be well if people were to place before themselves a *minimum* as well as a *maximum* scheme of what may seem desirable. It is desirable that popular or primary education should include many things—discipline in good habits both of mind and of body; instruction in the sciences appertaining to health, wealth, and human well-being; access to the best views on the

highest of all subjects which man can consider. But, supposing we are required for sheerly practical purposes to forego these wide ideas of education, and to accept a minimum scheme of what may be laboured for with some chance of success, might it not be well to make such a minimum consist in the setting up in all our parishes of such an apparatus of schools, as shall at least perform the one good and simple service of teaching all that are born among us thoroughly to read and write? After all, the accomplishment of perfect and easy reading in one's own vernacular is the grand distinction between the educated and the non-educated. There are degrees and differences among those above this line; but between those above and those below it there is a great gulf. Of all franchises that can be conferred on the working-man, the greatest is the franchise of books. Teach a man thoroughly to read and write; and he has the means of being almost anything he chooses to be, intellectually. Might it not be well, then, if we were to consider it as the primary function of a national school system—other things, of course, being reserved—to impart to all the children in a community, the full use of this franchise; in other words, if we were to be content, in the first place, with such a scheme of national education as would render it impossible for any boy or girl born on British ground to grow up untaught to read and write?

TOM BROWN AT OXFORD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL-DAYS."

INTRODUCTORY.

IN the Michaelmas term after leaving school, Tom Brown received a summons from the authorities, and went up to matriculate at St. Ambrose's College, Oxford. He presented himself at the college one afternoon, and was examined by one of the tutors, who carried him, and several other youths in like predicament, up to the Senate House the next morning; where they went through the usual forms of subscribing to the articles, and otherwise testifying their loyalty to the established order of things, without much thought perhaps, but in very good faith nevertheless. Having completed the ceremony, by paying his fees, our hero hurried back home, without making any stay in Oxford. He had often passed through it, so that the city had not the charm of novelty for him, and he was anxious to get home; where, as he had never spent an autumn away from school till now, for the first time in his life he was having his fill of hunting and shooting.

He had left school in June, and did not go up to reside at Oxford, till the end of the following January. Seven good months; during a part of which he had indeed read for four hours or so a week with the curate of the parish, but the residue had been exclusively devoted to cricket and field sports. Now, admirable as these institutions are, and beneficial as is their influence on the youth of Britain, it is possible for a youngster to get too much of them. So it had fallen out with our hero. He was a better horseman and shot, but the total relaxation of all the healthy discipline of school, the regular hours and regular work to which he had been used for so many years, had certainly thrown him back in other ways. The whole man

had not grown; so that we must not be surprised to find him quite as boyish, now that we fall in with him again, marching down to St. Ambrose's, with a porter wheeling his luggage after him on a truck, as when we left him at the end of his school career.

Tom was in truth beginning to feel that it was high time for him to be getting to regular work again of some sort. A landing place is a famous thing, but it is only enjoyable for a time, by any mortal who deserves one at all. So it was with a feeling of unmixed pleasure that he turned in at the St. Ambrose gates, and inquired of the porter what rooms had been allotted to him within those venerable walls.

While the porter consulted his list, the great college sun-dial, over the lodge, which had lately been renovated, caught Tom's eye. The motto underneath, "*Pereunt et imputantur*," stood out, proud of its new gilding, in the bright afternoon sun of a frosty January day: which motto was raising sundry thoughts in his brain, when the porter came upon the right place in his list, and directed him to the end of his journey: No. 5 staircase, second quadrangle, three-pair back. In which new home we shall leave him to instal himself, while we endeavour to give the reader some notion of the college itself.

CHAPTER I.

ST. AMBROSE'S COLLEGE.

ST. AMBROSE'S COLLEGE was a moderate sized one. There might have been some seventy or eighty undergraduates in residence, when our hero appeared there as a freshman. Of these, unfortunately for the college, there were a very large proportion of gentlemen-commoners; enough, in fact, with the other men

whom they drew round them, and who lived pretty much as they did, to form the largest and leading set in the college. So the college was decidedly fast; in fact, it was *the* fast college of the day.

The chief characteristic of this set was the most reckless extravagance of every kind. London wine merchants furnished them with liqueurs at a guinea a bottle, and wine at five guineas a dozen; Oxford and London tailors vied with one another in providing them with unheard of quantities of the most gorgeous clothing. They drove tandems in all directions, scattering their ample allowances, which they treated as pocket money, about roadside inns and Oxford taverns with open hand, and going tick for everything which could by possibility be booked. Their cigars cost two guineas a pound; their furniture was the best that could be bought; pine apples, forced fruit, and the most rare preserves figured at their wine parties; they hunted, rode steeple chases by day, played billiards until the gates closed, and then were ready for *vingt-et-une*, unlimited loo, and hot drink in their own rooms, as long as any one could be got to sit up and play.

The fast set then swamped, and gave the tone to the college; at which fact no persons were more astonished and horrified than the authorities of St. Ambrose.

That they of all bodies in the world should be fairly run away with by a set of reckless, loose young spendthrifts, was indeed a melancholy and unprecedented fact; for the body of fellows of St. Ambrose was as distinguished for learning, morality, and respectability, as any in the University. The foundation was not indeed actually an open one. Oriel at that time alone enjoyed this distinction; but there were a large number of open fellowships, and the income of the college was large, and the livings belonging to it numerous; so that the best men from other colleges were constantly coming in. Some of these of a former generation had been eminently successful in their management of the college. The St. Ambrose

undergraduates at one time had carried off almost all the university prizes, and filled the class lists, while maintaining at the same time the highest character for manliness and gentlemanly conduct. This had lasted long enough to establish the fame of the college, and great lords and statesmen had sent their sons there, head-masters had struggled to get the names of their best pupils on the books; in short, every one who had a son, ward, or pupil, whom he wanted to push forward in the world—who was meant to cut a figure, and take the lead among men—left no stone unturned to get him into St. Ambrose's; and thought the first and a very long step gained when he had succeeded.

But the governing bodies of colleges are always on the change, and in the course of things men of other ideas came to rule at St. Ambrose,—shrewd men of the world; men of business, some of them, with good ideas of making the most of their advantages; who said, "Go to: why should we not make the public pay for the great benefits we confer on them? Have we not the very best article in the educational market to supply—almost a monopoly of it—and shall we not get the highest price for it?" So by degrees they altered many things in the college. In the first place, under their auspices, gentlemen-commoners increased and multiplied; in fact, the eldest sons of baronets, even of squires, were scarcely admitted on any other footing. As these young gentlemen paid double fees to the college, and had great expectations of all sorts, it could not be expected that they should be subject to quite the same discipline as the common run of men, who would have to make their own way in the world. So the rules as to attendance at chapel and lectures were relaxed in their favour; and, that they might find all things suitable to persons in their position, the kitchen and buttery were worked up to a high state of perfection, and St. Ambrose, from having been one of the most reasonable, had come to be about the most expensive college in the university. These changes worked as

their promoters probably desired that they should work, and the college was full of rich men, and commanded in the university the sort of respect which riches bring with them; but the old reputation, though still strong out of doors, was beginning sadly to wane within the university precincts. Fewer and fewer of the St. Ambrose men appeared in the class lists, or amongst the prize-men. They no longer led the debates at the Union; the boat lost place after place on the river; the eleven got beaten in all their matches. The inaugurators of these changes had passed away in their turn, and at last a reaction had commenced. The fellows recently elected, and who were in residence at the time we write of, were for the most part men of great attainments, all of them men who had taken very high honours. The electors naturally enough had chosen them as the most likely persons to restore, as tutors, the golden days of the college; and they had been careful in the selection to confine themselves to very quiet and studious men, such as were likely to remain up at Oxford, passing over men of more popular manners and active spirits, who would be sure to flit soon into the world, and be of little more service to St. Ambrose.

But these were not the men to get any hold on the fast set who were now in the ascendant. It was not in the nature of things that they should understand each other; in fact, they were hopelessly at war, and the college was getting more and more out of gear in consequence.

What they could do, however, they were doing; and under their fostering care were growing up a small set, including most of the scholars, who were likely, so far as they were concerned, to retrieve the college character in the schools; but they were too much like their tutors, men who did little else but read. They neither wished nor were likely to gain the slightest influence on the fast set. The best men amongst them, too, were diligent readers of the *Tracts for the Times*, and followers of the able leaders of the

High-church party, which was then a growing one; and this led them also to form such friendships as they made amongst out-college men of their own way of thinking—with high churchmen, rather than St. Ambrose men. So they lived very much to themselves, and scarcely interfered with the dominant party.

Lastly, there was the boating set, which was beginning to revive in the college, partly from the natural disgust of any body of young Englishmen, at finding themselves distanced in an exercise requiring strength and pluck, and partly from the fact, that the captain for the time being was one of the best oars in the University boat, and also a deservedly popular character. He was now in his third year of residence, had won the pair-oar race, and had pulled seven in the great yearly match with Cambridge, and by constant hard work had managed to carry the St. Ambrose boat up to the fifth place on the river. He will be introduced to you, gentle readers, when the proper time comes; at present, we are only concerned with a bird's-eye view of the college, that you may feel more or less at home in it. The boating set was not so separate or marked as the reading set, melting on one side into, and keeping up more or less connexion with, the fast set, and also commanding a sort of half allegiance from most of the men who belonged to neither of the other sets. The minor divisions, of which of course there were many, need not be particularized, as the above general classification will be enough for the purposes of this history.

Our hero, on leaving school, had bound himself solemnly to write all his doings and thoughts to the friend whom he had left behind him: distance and separation were to make no difference whatever in their friendship. This compact had been made on one of their last evenings at Rugby. They were sitting together in the sixth-form room, Tom splicing the handle of a favourite cricket bat, and Arthur reading a volume of Raleigh's works. The Doctor had lately been alluding to the "History of the World,"

and had excited the curiosity of the attentive-minded amongst his pupils about the great navigator, statesman, soldier, author, and fine gentleman. So Raleigh's works were seized on by various voracious young readers, and carried out of the school library; and Arthur was now deep in a volume of the "Miscellanies," curled up on a corner of the sofa. Presently, Tom heard something between a groan and a protest, and, looking up, demanded explanations; in answer to which, Arthur, in a voice half furious and half fearful, read out:—

"And be sure of this, thou shalt never find a friend in thy young years whose conditions and qualities will please thee after thou comest to more discretion and judgment; and then all thou givest is lost, and all wherein thou shalt trust such a one will be discovered."

"You don't mean that's Raleigh's?"

"Yes—here it is, in his first letter to his son."

"What a cold-blooded old Philistine," said Tom.

"But it can't be true, do you think?" said Arthur.

And, in short, after some personal reflections on Sir Walter, they then and there resolved that, so far as they were concerned, it was not, could not, and should not be true; that they would remain faithful, the same to each other, and the greatest friends in the world, through I know not what separations, trials, and catastrophes. And for the better insuring this result, a correspondence, regular as the recurring months, was to be maintained. It had already lasted through the long vacation and up to Christmas without sensibly dragging, though Tom's letters had been something of the shortest in November, when he had had lots of shooting, and two days a week with the hounds. Now, however, having fairly got to Oxford, he determined to make up for all short-comings. His first letter from college, taken in connexion with the previous sketch of the place, will probably accomplish the work of introduction better than any detailed account by a third party; and it is therefore given here verbatim:—

"St. Ambrose, Oxford,
"February 1, 184—"

"MY DEAR GEORDIE,

"According to promise, I write to tell you how I get on up here, and what sort of a place Oxford is. Of course, I don't know much about it yet, having been only up some two weeks; but you shall have my first impressions.

"Well, first and foremost, it's an awfully idle place; at any rate, for us freshmen. Fancy now. I am in twelve lectures a week of an hour each—Greek Testament, first book of Herodotus, second Æneid, and first book of Euclid! There's a treat! Two hours a day; all over by twelve, or one at latest; and no extra work at all, in the shape of copies of verses, themes, or other exercises.

"I think sometimes I'm back in the lower fifth; for we don't get through more than we used to do there; and if you were to hear the men construe, it would make your hair stand on end. Where on earth can they have come from? unless they blunder on purpose, as I often think. Of course, I never look at a lecture before I go in; I know it all nearly by heart; so it would be sheer waste of time. I hope I shall take to reading something or other by myself; but you know I never was much of a hand at sapping, and, for the present, the light work suits me well enough, for there's lots to see and learn about in this place.

"We keep very gentlemanly hours. Chapel every morning at eight, and evening at seven. You must attend once a day, and twice on Sundays—at least, that's the rule of our college—and be in gates by twelve o'clock at night. Besides which, if you're a decently steady fellow, you ought to dine in hall perhaps four days a week. Hall is at five o'clock. And now you have the sum total. All the rest of your time you may just do what you like with.

"So much for our work and hours. Now for the place. Well, it's a grand old place, certainly; and I dare say, if a fellow goes straight in it, and gets creditably through his three years, he may end by loving it as much as we do

the old school-house and quadrangle at Rugby. Our college is a fair specimen: a venerable old front of crumbling stone fronting the street, into which two or three other colleges look also. Over the gateway is a large room, where the college examinations go on, when there are any; and, as you enter, you pass the porter's lodge, where resides our janitor, a bustling little man, with a pot belly, whose business it is to put down the time at which the men come in at night, and to keep all discommoded tradesmen, stray dogs, and bad characters generally, out of the college.

"The large quadrangle into which you come first, is bigger than ours at Rugby, and a much more solemn and sleepy sort of a place, with its little gables and old mullioned windows. One side is occupied by the hall and chapel; the principal's house takes up half another side; and the rest is divided into staircases, on each of which are six or eight sets of rooms, inhabited by us undergraduates, with here and there a tutor or fellow dropped down amongst us (in the first-floor rooms, of course), not exactly to keep order, but to act as a sort of ballast. This quadrangle is the show part of the college, and is generally respectable and quiet, which is a good deal more than can be said for the inner quadrangle, which you get at through a passage leading out of the other. The rooms ain't half so large or good in the inner quad; and here's where all we freshmen live, besides a lot of the older undergraduates who don't care to change their rooms. Only one tutor has rooms here; and I should think, if he's a reading man, it won't be long before he clears out; for all sorts of high jinks go on on the grass plot, and the row on the staircases is often as bad, and not half so respectable, as it used to be in the middle passage in the last week of the half year.

"My rooms are what they call garrets, right up in the roof, with a commanding view of college tiles and chimney pots, and of houses at the back. No end of cats, both college Toms and strangers haunt the neighbourhood, and I am ra-

pidly learning cat-talk from them; but I'm not going to stand it,—I don't want to know cat-talk. The college Toms are protected by the statutes, I believe; but I'm going to buy an air-gun for the benefit of the strangers. My rooms are pleasant enough, at the top of the kitchen staircase, and separated from all mankind by a great, iron-clamped, outer door, my oak, which I sport when I go out, or want to be quiet; sitting-room eighteen by twelve, bed-room twelve by eight, and a little cupboard for the scout.

"Ah Geordie, the scout is an institution! Fancy me waited upon and valeted by a stout party in black, of quiet, gentlemanly manners, like the benevolent father in a comedy. He takes the deepest interest in all my possessions and proceedings, and is evidently used to good society, to judge by the amount of crockery and glass, wines, liquors, and grocery, which he thinks indispensable for my due establishment. He has also been good enough to recommend to me many tradesmen who are ready to supply these articles in any quantities; each of whom has been here already a dozen times, cap in hand, and vowing that it is quite immaterial when I pay,—which is very kind of them; but, with the highest respect for friend Perkins (my scout) and his obliging friends, I shall make some inquiries before "letting in" with any of them. He waits on me in hall, where we go in full fig of cap and gown at five, and get very good dinners, and cheap enough. It is rather a fine old room, with a good, arched, black oak ceiling and high paneling, hung round with pictures of old swells, bishops and lords chiefly, who have endowed the college in some way, or at least have fed here in times gone by, and for whom, "*cæterisque benefactoribus nostris*," we daily give thanks in a long Latin grace, which one of the undergraduates (I think it must be) goes and rattles out at the end of the high table, and then comes down again from the dais to his own place. No one feeds at the high table except the dons and the gentlemen-commoners, who are undergraduates in velvet caps and silk

gowns : why they wear these instead of cloth and serge I haven't yet made out, —I believe it is because they pay double fees ; but they seem uncommonly wretched up at the high table, and I should think would sooner pay double to come to the other end of hall.

"The chapel is a quaint little place, about the size of the chancel of Lutterworth Church. It just holds us all comfortably. The attendance is regular enough, but I don't think the men care about it a bit in general. Several I can see bring in Euclids and other lecture books, and the service is gone through at a great pace. I couldn't think at first why some of the men seemed so uncomfortable and stiff about the legs at the morning service, but I find that they are the hunting set, and come in with pea-coats over their pinks, and trousers over their leather breeches and top-boots ; which accounts for it. There are a few others who seem very devout, and bow a good deal, and turn towards the altar at different parts of the service. These are of the Oxford High-church school, I believe ; but I shall soon find out more about them. On the whole, I feel less at home, I am sorry to say, at present in the chapel than anywhere else.

"I was very nearly forgetting a great institution of the college, which is the buttery-hatch, just opposite the hall-door. Here abides the fat old butler (all the servants at St. Ambrose's are portly), and serves out limited bread, butter, and cheese, and unlimited beer brewed by himself, for an hour in the morning, at noon, and again at supper-time. Your scout always fetches you a pint or so on each occasion, in case you should want it, and if you don't, it falls to him ; but I can't say that my fellow gets much, for I am naturally a thirsty soul, and cannot often resist the malt myself, coming up, as it does, fresh and cool, in one of the silver tankards, of which we seem to have an endless supply.

"I spent a day or two in the first week, before I got shaken down into my place here, in going round and seeing the other colleges, and finding out what

great men had been at each (one got a taste for that sort of work from the Doctor, and I'd nothing else to do). Well, I never was more interested : fancy ferreting out Wycliffe, the Black Prince, Sir Walter Raleigh, Pym, Hampden, Laud, Ireton, Butler, and Addison, in one afternoon. I walked about two inches taller in my trencher cap after it. Perhaps I may be going to make dear friends with some fellow who will change the history of England. Why shouldn't I ? There must have been freshmen once who were chums of Wycliffe of Queen's, or Raleigh of Oriel. I mooned up and down the High-street, staring at all the young faces in caps, and wondering which of them would turn out great generals, or statesmen, or poets. Some of them will, of course, for there must be a dozen at least, I should think, in every generation of undergraduates who will have a good deal to say to the ruling and guiding of the British nation before they die.

"But, after all, the river is the feature of Oxford, to my mind ; a glorious stream, not five minutes' walk from the colleges, broad enough in most places for three boats to row abreast. I expect I shall take to boating furiously ; I have been down the river three or four times already with some other freshmen, and it is glorious exercise ; that I can see, though we bungle and cut crabs desperately at present.

"Here's a long yarn I'm spinning for you ; and I dare say after all you'll say it tells you nothing, and you'd rather have twenty lines about the men, and what they're thinking about, and the meaning and inner life of the place, and all that. Patience, patience ! I don't know anything about it myself yet, and have only had time to look at the shell, which is a very handsome and stately affair ; you shall have the kernel, if ever I get at it, in due time.

"And now write me a long letter directly, and tell me about the Doctor, and who are in the Sixth, and how the house goes on, and what sort of an eleven there'll be, and what you are all doing and thinking about. Come up here and

try for a scholarship; I'll take you in, and show you the lions. Remember me to all old friends.—Ever yours affectionately,
T. B."

CHAPTER II.

A ROW ON THE RIVER.

WITHIN a day or two of the penning of this celebrated epistle, which created quite a sensation in the sixth-form room as it went the round after tea, Tom realized one of the objects of his young Oxford ambition, and succeeded in embarking on the river in a skiff by himself, with such results as are now to be described. He had already been down several times in pair-oar and four-oar boats, with an old oar to pull stroke and another to steer and coach the young idea, but he was not satisfied with these essays. He could not believe that he was such a bad oar as the old hands made him out to be, and thought that it must be the fault of the other freshmen who were learning with him that the boat made so little way and rolled so much. He had been such a proficient in all the Rugby games, that he couldn't realize the fact of his unreadiness in a boat. Pulling looked a simple thing enough—much easier than tennis; and he had made a capital start at the latter game, and been highly complimented by the marker after his first hour in the little court. He forgot that cricket and fives are capital training for tennis, but that rowing is a speciality, of the rudiments of which he was wholly ignorant. And so, in full confidence that, if he could only have a turn or two alone, he should not only satisfy himself, but every body else, that he was a heaven-born oar, he refused all offers of companionship, and started on the afternoon of a fine February day down to the boats for his trial trip. He had watched his regular companions well out of college, and gave them enough start to make sure that they would be off before he himself could arrive at the St. Ambrose's dressing-room at Hall's, and chuckled, as he came within sight of the river, to see the freshmen's boat in which he generally performed go plung-

No. 1.

ing away past the University barge, keeping three different times with four oars, and otherwise demeaning itself so as to become an object of mirthful admiration to all beholders.

Tom was punted across to Hall's in a state of great content, which increased when in answer to his casual inquiry the managing man informed him that not a man of his college was about the place. So he ordered a skiff with as much dignity and coolness as he could command, and hastened upstairs to dress. He appeared again, carrying his boating coat and cap. They were quite new, so he would not wear them; nothing about him should betray the freshman on this day if he could help it.

"Is my skiff ready?"

"All right, sir; this way, sir," said the manager, conducting him to a good safe-looking craft. "Any gentleman going to steer, sir?"

"No," said Tom, superciliously; "you may take out the rudder."

"Going quite alone, sir? Better take one of our boys—find you a very light one. Here, Bill!"—and he turned to summons a juvenile waterman to take charge of our hero.

"Take out the rudder, do you hear?" interrupted Tom. "I won't have a steerer."

"Well, sir, as you please," said the manager, proceeding to remove the degrading appendage. "The river's rather high, please to remember, sir. You must mind the mill-stream at Ifley Lock. I suppose you can swim?"

"Yes, of course," said Tom, settling himself on his cushion. "Now, shove her off."

The next moment he was well out in the stream, and left to his own resources. He got his sculls out successfully enough, and, though feeling by no means easy on his seat, proceeded to pull very deliberately past the barges, stopping his sculls in the air to feather accurately, in the hopes of deceiving spectators into the belief that he was an old hand just going out for a gentle paddle. The manager watched him for a minute, and

turned to his work with an aspiration that he might not come to grief.

But no thought of grief was on Tom's mind as he dropped gently down, impatient for the time when he should pass the mouth of the Cherwell, and so, having no longer critical eyes to fear, might put out his whole strength, and give himself at least, if not the world, assurance of a waterman.

The day was a very fine one, a bright sun shining, and a nice fresh breeze blowing across the stream, but not enough to ruffle the water seriously. Some heavy storms up Gloucestershire way had cleared the air, and swollen the stream at the same time; in fact, the river was as full as it could be without overflowing its banks—a state in which, of all others, it is the least safe for boating experiments. Fortunately, in those days there were no outriggers. Even the racing skiffs were comparatively safe craft, and would be now characterized as tubs; while the real tubs (in one of the safest of which the prudent manager had embarked our hero) were of such build that it required considerable ingenuity actually to upset them.

If any ordinary amount of bungling could have done it, Tom's voyage would have terminated within a hundred yards of the Cherwell. While he had been sitting quiet and merely paddling, and almost letting the stream carry him down, the boat had trimmed well enough; but now, taking a long breath, he leaned forward, and dug his sculls into the water, pulling them through with all his strength. The consequence of this feat was that the handles of the sculls came into violent collision in the middle of the boat, the knuckles of his right hand were barked, his left scull unshipped, and the head of his skiff almost blown round by the wind before he could restore order on board.

"Never mind; try again," thought he, after the first sensation of disgust had passed off, and a glance at the shore showed him that there were no witnesses. "Of course, I forgot, one hand must go over the other. It might have happened to any one. Let me see, which hand

shall I keep uppermost; the left, that's the weakest." And away he went again, keeping his newly-acquired fact painfully in mind, and so avoiding further collision amidships for four or five strokes. But, as, in other sciences, the giving of undue prominence to one fact brings others inexorably on the head of the student to avenge his neglect of them; so it happened with Tom in his practical study of the science of rowing, that by thinking of his hands he forgot his seat, and the necessity of trimming properly. Whereupon the old tub began to rock fearfully, and the next moment he missed the water altogether with his right scull, and subsided backwards, not without struggles, into the bottom of the boat; while the half-stroke which he had pulled with his left hand sent her head well into the bank.

Tom picked himself up, and settled himself on his bench again, a sadder and a wiser man; as the truth began to dawn upon him that pulling, especially sculling, does not, like reading and writing, come by nature. However, he addressed himself manfully to his task; savage indeed, and longing to drive a hole in the bottom of the old tub, but as resolved as ever to get to Sandford and back before hall time, or perish in the attempt.

He shoved himself off the bank, and, warned by his last mishap, got out into mid stream, and there, moderating his ardour, and contenting himself with a slow and steady stroke, was progressing satisfactorily, and beginning to recover his temper, when a loud shout startled him; and, looking over his shoulder at the imminent risk of an upset, he beheld the fast sailer the Dart, close hauled on a wind, and almost aboard of him. Utterly ignorant of what was the right thing to do, he held on his course, and passed close under the bows of the miniature cutter, the steersman having jammed his helm hard down, shaking her in the wind, to prevent running over the skiff, and solacing himself with pouring maledictions on Tom and his craft, in which the man who had hold of the sheets, and the third, who was lounging in the

bows, heartily joined. Tom was out of ear shot before he had collected vituperation enough to hurl back at them, and was, moreover, already in the difficult navigation of the Gut, where, notwithstanding all his efforts, he again ran aground; but with this exception he arrived without other mishap at Iffley, where he lay on his sculls with much satisfaction, and shouted, "Lock—lock!"

The lock-keeper appeared to the summons, but instead of opening the gates seized a long boat-hook and rushed towards our hero, calling on him to mind the mill-stream, and pull his right-hand scull; notwithstanding which warning, Tom was within an ace of drifting past the entrance to the lock, in which case assuredly his boat, if not he, had never returned whole. However, the lock-keeper managed to catch the stern of his skiff with the boat-hook, and drag him back into the proper channel, and then opened the lock-gates for him. Tom congratulated himself as he entered the lock that there were no other boats going through with him; but his evil star was in the ascendant, and all things, animate and inanimate, seemed to be leagued together to humiliate him. As the water began to fall rapidly, he lost his hold of the chain, and the tub instantly drifted across the lock, and was in imminent danger of sticking and breaking her back, when the lock-keeper again came to the rescue with his boat-hook; and, guessing the state of the case, did not quit him until he had safely shoved him and his boat well out into the pool below, with an exhortation to mind and go outside of the barge which was coming up.

Tom started on the latter half of his outward voyage with the sort of look which Cato must have worn when he elected the losing side, and all the gods went over to the winning one. But his previous struggles had not been thrown away, and he managed to keep the right side of the barge, turn the corner without going aground, and zig-zag down Kennington reach, slowly indeed, and with much labour, but at any rate safely. Rejoicing in this feat, he stopped at the

island, and recreated himself with a glass of beer, looking now hopefully towards Sandford, which lay within easy distance, now upwards again along the reach which he had just overcome, and solacing himself with the remembrance of a dictum, which he had heard from a great authority, that it was always easier to steer up stream than down, from which he argued that the worst part of his trial trip was now over.

Presently he saw a skiff turn the corner at the top of the Kennington reach, and, resolving in his mind to get to Sandford before the new comer, peid for his beer, and betook himself again to his tub. He got pretty well off, and, the island shutting out his unconscious rival from his view, worked away at first under the pleasing delusion that he was holding his own. But he was soon undeceived, for in monstrously short time the pursuing skiff showed round the corner, and bore down on him. He never relaxed his efforts, but could not help watching the enemy as he came up with him hand over hand, and envying the perfect ease with which he seemed to be pulling his long steady stroke, and the precision with which he steered, scarcely ever casting a look over his shoulder. He was hugging the Berkshire side himself, as the other skiff passed him, and thought he heard the sculler say something about keeping out, and minding the small lasher; but the noise of waters and his own desperate efforts prevented his heeding, or, indeed, hearing the warning plainly. In another minute, however, he heard plainly enough most energetic shouts behind him; and, turning his head over his right shoulder, saw the man who had just passed him backing his skiff rapidly up stream towards him. The next moment he felt the bows of his boat turn suddenly to the left; the old tub grounded for a moment, and then, turning over on her side, shot him out on to the planking of the steep descent into the small lasher. He grasped at the boards, but they were too slippery to hold, and the rush of water was too strong for him, and, rolling him over and over, like a

piece of drift wood, plunged him into the pool below.

After the first moment of astonishment and fright was over, Tom left himself to the stream, holding his breath hard, and paddling gently with his hands, feeling sure that, if he could only hold on, he should come to the surface sooner or later; which accordingly happened after a somewhat lengthy submersion.

His first impulse on rising to the surface, after catching his breath, was to strike out for the shore, but, in the act of doing so, he caught sight of the other skiff coming stern foremost down the descent after him, and he trod the water and drew in his breath to watch. Down she came, as straight as an arrow, into the tumult below; the sculler sitting upright, and holding his sculls steadily in the water. For a moment she seemed to be going under, but righted herself, and glided swiftly into the still water; and then the sculler cast a hasty and anxious glance round, till his eyes rested on our hero's half-drowned head.

"Oh, there you are!" he said, looking much relieved; "all right, I hope. Not hurt, eh?"

"No, thankee; all right, I believe," answered Tom. "What shall I do?"

"Swim ashore; I'll look after your boat." So Tom took the advice, swam ashore, and there stood dripping and watching the other as he righted the old tub, which was floating quietly bottom upwards, little the worse for the mishap, and no doubt, if boats can wish, earnestly desiring in her wooden mind to be allowed to go quietly to pieces then and there, sooner than be rescued to be again entrusted to the guidance of freshmen.

The tub having been brought to the bank, the stranger started again, and collected the sculls and bottom boards, which were floating about here and there in the pool, and also succeeded in making salvage of Tom's coat, the pockets of which held his watch, purse, and cigar case. These he brought to the bank, and, delivering them over, inquired whether there was anything else to look after.

"Thank you, no; nothing but my cap. Never mind it. It's luck enough not to have lost the coat," said Tom, holding up the dripping garment to let the water run out of the arms and pocket-holes, and then wringing it as well as he could. "At any rate," thought he, "I needn't be afraid of its looking too new any more."

The stranger put off again, and made one more round, searching for the cap and anything else which he might have overlooked, but without success. While he was doing so, Tom had time to look him well over, and see what sort of man had come to his rescue. He hardly knew at the time the full extent of his obligation—at least if this sort of obligation is to be reckoned not so much by the service actually rendered, as by the risk encountered to be able to render it. There were probably not three men in the University who would have dared to shoot the lasher in a skiff in its then state, for it was in those times a really dangerous place; and Tom himself had had an extraordinary escape, for, as Miller, the St. Ambrose coxswain, remarked on hearing the story, "No one who wasn't born to be hung could have rolled down it without knocking his head against something hard, and going down like lead when he got to the bottom."

He was very well satisfied with his inspection. The other man was evidently a year or two older than himself, his figure was more set, and he had stronger whiskers than are generally grown at twenty. He was somewhere about five feet ten in height, very deep-chested, and with long powerful arms and hands. There was no denying, however, that at the first glance he was an ugly man; he was marked with small-pox, had large features, high cheek-bones, deeply set eyes, and a very long chin; and had got the trick which many underhung men have of compressing his upper lip. Nevertheless, there was that in his face which hit Tom's fancy, and made him anxious to know the other better. He had an instinct that he should get good out of him. So he was very glad when

the search was ended, and the stranger came to the bank, shipped his sculls, and jumped out with the painter of his skiff in his hand, which he proceeded to fasten to an old stump, while he remarked—

"I'm afraid the cap's lost."

"It doesn't matter the least. Thank you for coming to help me; it was very kind indeed, and more than I expected. Don't they say that one Oxford man will never save another from drowning unless they have been introduced?"

"I don't know," replied the other; "are you sure you're not hurt?"

"Yes, quite," said Tom, foiled in what he considered an artful plan to get the stranger to introduce himself.

"Then we're very well out of it," said the other, looking at the steep descent into the lasher, and the rolling tumbling rush of the water below.

"Indeed we are," said Tom; "but how in the world did you manage not to upset?"

"I hardly know myself—I have shipped a good deal of water, you see. Perhaps I ought to have jumped out on the bank and come across to you, leaving my skiff in the river, for if I had upset I couldn't have helped you much. However, I followed my instinct, which was to come the quickest way. I thought, too, that if I could manage to get down in the boat I should be of more use. I'm very glad I did it," he added after a moment's pause; "I'm really proud of having come down that place."

"So ain't I," said Tom with a laugh, in which the other joined.

"But now you're getting chilled," and he turned from the lasher and looked at Tom's chattering jaws.

"Oh, it's nothing. I'm used to being wet."

"But you may just as well be comfortable if you can. Here's this rough jersey which I use instead of a coat; pull off that wet cotton affair and put it on, and then we'll get to work, for we have plenty to do."

After a little persuasion Tom did as he was bid, and got into the great

woollen garment, which was very comforting; and then the two set about getting their skiffs back into the main stream. This was comparatively easy as to the lighter skiff, which was soon baled out and hauled by main force on to the bank, carried across and launched again. The tub gave them much more trouble, for she was quite full of water and very heavy; but after twenty minutes or so of hard work, during which the mutual respect of the labourers for the strength and willingness of each other was much increased, she also lay in the main stream, leaking considerably, but otherwise not much the worse for her adventure.

"Now what do you mean to do?" said the stranger. "I don't think you can pull home in her. One doesn't know how much she may be damaged. She may sink in the lock, or play any prank."

"But what am I to do with her?"

"Oh, you can leave her at Sandford and walk up, and send one of Hall's boys for her, or if you like I will tow her up behind my skiff."

"Won't your skiff carry two?"

"Yes; if you like to come I'll take you, but you must sit very quiet."

"Can't we go down to Sandford first and have a glass of ale? What time is it?—the water has stopped my watch."

"A quarter-past three. I have about twenty minutes to spare."

"Come along, then," said Tom; "but will you let me pull your skiff down to Sandford? I resolved to pull to Sandford to-day, and don't like to give it up."

"By all means, if you like," said the other with a smile; "jump in, and I'll walk along the bank."

"Thank you," said Tom, hurrying into the skiff, in which he completed the remaining quarter of a mile, while the owner walked by the side, watching him.

They met on the bank at the little inn by Sandford lock, and had a glass of ale, over which Tom confessed that it was the first time he had ever navigated a skiff by himself, and gave a

detailed account of his adventures, to the great amusement of his companion. And by the time they rose to go, it was settled, at Tom's earnest request, that he should pull the sound skiff up, while his companion sat in the stern and coached him. The other consented very kindly, merely stipulating that he himself should take the sculls, if it should prove that Tom could not pull them up in time for hall dinner. So they started, and took the tub in tow when they came up to it. Tom got on famously under his new tutor, who taught him to get forward, and open his knees properly, and throw his weight on to the sculls at the beginning of the stroke. He managed even to get into Ifley lock on the way up without fouling the gates, and was then and there complimented on his progress. Whereupon, as they sat there, while the lock filled, Tom poured out his thanks to his tutor for his instruction, which had been given so judiciously that, while he was conscious of improving at every stroke, he did not feel that the other was asserting any superiority over him; and so, though he was really much more humble than at the most disastrous period of his downward voyage, instead of being brimfull of wrath and indignation, was getting into a better temper every minute.

It is a great pity that some of our instructors in more important matters than sculling will not take a leaf out of the same book. Of course, it is more satisfactory to one's own self-love, to make every one who comes to one to learn, feel that he is a fool, and we wise men; but, if our object is to teach well and usefully what we know ourselves, there cannot be a worse method. I suppose that no man is likely to adopt it, so long as he is conscious that he has anything himself to learn from his pupils; and as soon as he has arrived at the conviction that they can teach him nothing—that it is henceforth to be all give and no take—the sooner he throws up his office of teacher, the better it will be for himself, his pupils, and his country, whose sons he is misguiding.

On their way up, so intent were they

on their own work that it was not until shouts of "Hullo, Brown! how did you get there? Why, you said you were not going down to-day," greeted them just above the Gut, that they were aware of the presence of the freshmen's four-oar of St. Ambrose College, which had with some trouble succeeded in overtaking them.

"I said I wasn't going down with you," shouted Tom, grinding away harder than ever, that they might witness and wonder at his prowess.

"Oh, I dare say! Whose skiff are you towing up? I believe you've been upset."

Tom made no reply, and the four-oar floundered on ahead.

"Are you at St. Ambrose's?" asked his sitter, after a minute.

"Yes; that's my treadmill, that four-oar. I've been down in it almost every day since I came up, and very poor fun it is. So I thought to-day I would go on my own hook, and see if I couldn't make a better hand of it. And I have, too, I know, thanks to you."

The other made no remark, but a little shade came over his face. He had had no chance of making out Tom's college, as the new cap which would have betrayed him had disappeared in the lasher. He himself wore a glazed straw hat, which was of no college; so that up to this time neither of them had known to what college the other belonged.

When they landed at Hall's, Tom was at once involved in a wrangle with the manager as to the amount of damage done to the tub; which the latter refused to assess before he knew what had happened to it; while our hero vigorously and with reason maintained, that if he knew his business it could not matter what had happened to the boat. There she was, and he must say whether she was better or worse, or how much worse than when she started. In the middle of which dialogue his new acquaintance, touching his arm, said, "You can leave my jersey with your own things; I shall get it to-morrow," and then disappeared.

Tom, when he had come to terms with

his adversary, ran upstairs, expecting to find the other, and meaning to tell his name, and find out who it was that had played the good Samaritan by him. He was much annoyed when he found the coast clear, and dressed in a grumbling humour. "I wonder why he should have gone off so quick. He might just as well have stayed and walked up with me," thought he. "Let me see, though; didn't he say I was to leave his jersey in our room, with my own things? Why, perhaps he is a St. Ambrose man himself. But then he would have told me so, surely. I don't remember to have seen his face in chapel or hall; but then there are such a lot of new faces, and he may not sit near me. However, I mean to find him out before long, whoever he may be." With which resolve Tom crossed in the punt into Christ's Church meadow, and strolled college-wards, feeling that he had had a good hard afternoon's exercise, and was much the better for it. He might have satisfied his curiosity at once by simply asking the manager who it was that had arrived with him; and this occurred to him before he got home, whereat he felt satisfied, but would not go back then, as it was so near hall time. He would be sure to remember it the first thing to-morrow.

As it happened, however, he had not so long to wait for the information which he needed; for scarcely had he sat down in Hall and ordered his dinner, when he caught sight of his boating acquaintance, who walked in habited in a gown which Tom took for a scholar's. He took his seat at a little table in the middle of the hall, near the bachelors' table, but quite away from the rest of the undergraduates, at which sat four or five other men in similar gowns. He either did not or would not notice the looks of recognition which Tom kept firing at him until he had taken his seat.

"Who is that man that has just come in, do you know?" said Tom to his next neighbour, a second term man.

"Which?" said the other, looking up.

"That one over at the little table in the middle of the hall, with the dark

whiskers. There, he has just turned rather from us, and put his arm on the table."

"Oh, his name is Hardy."

"Do you know him?"

"No; I don't think anybody does. They say he is a clever fellow, but a very queer one."

"Why does he sit at that table?"

"He is one of our servitors," said the other; "they all sit there together."

"Oh," said Tom, not much the wiser for the information, but resolved to way-lay Hardy as soon as hall was over, and highly delighted to find that they were after all of the same college; for he had already begun to find out, that however friendly you may be with out-college men, you must live chiefly with those of your own. But now his scout brought his dinner, and he fell to with marvellous appetite on his ample commons.

CHAPTER III.

A BREAKFAST AT DRYSDALE'S.

No man in St. Ambrose College gave such breakfasts as Drysdale. I don't mean the great heavy spreads for thirty or forty, which came once or twice a term, when everything was supplied out of the college kitchen, and you had to ask leave of the Dean before you could have it at all. In those ponderous feasts the most hum-drum of undergraduate kind might rival the most artistic, if he could only pay his battel-bill, or get credit with the cook. But the daily morning meal, when even gentlemen-commoners were limited to two hot dishes out of the kitchen, this was Drysdale's forte. Ordinary men left the matter in the hands of scouts, and were content with the ever-recurring buttered toast and eggs, with a dish of broiled ham, or something of the sort, and marmalade and bitter ale to finish with; but Drysdale was not an ordinary man, as you felt in a moment when you went to breakfast with him for the first time.

The staircase on which he lived was inhabited, except in the garrets, by men in the fast set, and he and three others,

who had an equal aversion to solitary feeding, had established a breakfast-club, in which, thanks to Drysdale's genius, real scientific gastronomy was cultivated. Every morning the boy from the Weirs arrived with freshly-caught gudgeon, and now and then an eel or trout, which the scouts on the staircase had learnt to fry delicately in oil. Fresh watercresses came in the same basket, and the college kitchen furnished a spitch-cocked chicken, or grilled turkey's leg. In the season there were plover's eggs; or, at the worst, there was a dainty omelette; and a distant baker, famed for his light rolls and high charges, sent in the bread—the common domestic college loaf being of course out of the question for any one with the slightest pretensions to taste, and becoming the perquisite of the scouts. Then there would be a deep Yorkshire pie, or reservoir of potted game, as a *pièce de résistance*, and three or four sorts of preserves; and a large cool tankard of cider or ale-cup to finish up with, or soda-water and maraschino for a change. Tea and coffee were there indeed, but merely as a compliment to those respectable beverages, for they were rarely touched by the breakfast-eaters of No. 3 staircase. Pleasant young gentlemen they were on No. 3 staircase; I mean the ground and first-floor men who formed the breakfast-club, for the garrets were nobodies. Three out of the four were gentlemen-commoners, with allowances of £500 a year at least each; and, as they treated their allowances as pocket-money only, and went tick for everything which the wide range of Oxford tradesmen would book, and as they were all in their first year, ready money was plenty and credit good; and they might have had potted hippopotamus for breakfast if they had chosen to order it, which I verily believe they would have done if they had thought of it.

Two out of the three were the sons of rich men who had made their own fortunes, and sent their sons to St. Ambrose's because it was very desirable that the young gentlemen should make good connexions. In fact, the fathers

looked upon the University as a good investment, and gloried much in hearing their sons talk familiarly in the vacations of their dear friends Lord Harry This and Sir George That.

Drysdale, the third of the set, was the heir of an old as well as of a rich family, and consequently, having his connexion ready made to his hand, cared little enough whom he associated with, provided they were pleasant fellows, and gave him good food and wines. His whole idea at present was to enjoy himself as much as possible; but he had good manly stuff in him at the bottom, and, had he fallen into any but the fast set, would have made a fine fellow, and done credit to himself and his college.

The fourth man of the breakfast-club, the Hon. Piers St. Cloud, was in his third year, and was a very well-dressed, well-mannered, well-connected young man. His family was poor, and his allowance small, but he never wanted for anything. He didn't entertain much, certainly, but when he did, everything was in the best possible style. He was very exclusive, and knew no man in college out of the fast set; and of these he addicted himself chiefly to the society of the rich freshmen, for somehow the men of his own standing seemed a little shy of him. But with the freshmen he was always hand and glove, lived in their rooms, and used their wines, horses, and other movable property as his own; and, being a good whist and billiard player, and not a bad jockey, managed in one way or another to make his young friends pay well for the honour of his acquaintance; as, indeed, why should they not, at least those of them who came to college to form eligible connexions; for had not his remote lineal ancestor come over in the same ship with William the Conqueror? were not all his relations about the Court, as lords and ladies in waiting, white sticks or black rods, and in the innermost of all possible circles of the great world; and was there a better coat of arms than he bore in all Burke's Peerage?

Our hero had met Drysdale at a house in the country shortly before the beginning of his first term, and they had rather taken to one another; so as soon as Tom came up, Drysdale had left his pasteboard; and, as he came out of chapel one morning shortly after his arrival, Drysdale's scout came up to him with an invitation to breakfast. So he went to his own rooms, ordered his commons to be taken across to No. 3, and followed himself a few minutes afterwards. No one was in the rooms when he arrived, for none of the club had finished their toilettes. Morning chapel was not meant for, or cultivated by, gentlemen-commoners; they paid double chapel fees, in consideration of which, I suppose, they were not expected to attend so often as the rest of the undergraduates; at any rate, they didn't, and no harm came to them in consequence of their absence. As Tom entered, a great splashing in an inner room stopped for a moment, and Drysdale's voice shouted out that he was in his tub, but would be with him in a minute. So Tom gave himself up to the contemplation of the rooms in which his fortunate acquaintance dwelt; and very pleasant rooms they were. The large room, in which the breakfast-table was laid for five, was lofty and well proportioned, and paneled with old oak, and the furniture was handsome and solid, and in keeping with the room.

There were four deep windows, high up in the wall, with cushioned seats under them, two looking into the large quadrangle, and two into the inner one. Outside these windows, Drysdale had rigged up hanging gardens, which were kept full of flowers by the first nurseryman in Oxford all the year round; so that even on this February morning, the scent of gardenia and violets pervaded the room, and strove for mastery with the smell of stale tobacco which hung about the curtains and sofas. There was a large glass in an oak frame over the mantelpiece, which was loaded with choice pipes and cigar-cases, and quaint receptacles for tobacco; and by the side of the glass hung small carved

oak frames, containing lists of the meets of the Heythrop, the Old Berkshire, and Drake's hounds, for the current week. There was a queer assortment of well-framed paintings and engravings on the walls; some of considerable merit, especially some water-colour sea-pieces and engravings from Landseer's pictures, mingled with which hung Taglioni and Cerito, in short petticoats and impossible attitudes; Phosphorus winning the Derby; the Death of Grimaldi (the famous steeple-chase horse—not poor old Joe); an American Trotting Match, and Jem Belcher and Deaf Burke in attitudes of self-defence. Several tandem and riding whips, mounted in heavy silver, and a double-barrelled gun, and fishing rods, occupied one corner, and a polished copper cask, holding about five gallons of mild ale, stood in another. In short, there was plenty of everything except books—the literature of the world being represented, so far as Tom could make out in his short scrutiny, by a few well-bound but badly-used volumes of classics, with the eribs thereto appertaining, shoved away into a cupboard which stood half open, and contained, besides, half-emptied decanters, and large pewters, and dog-collars, and packs of cards, and all sorts of miscellaneous articles to serve as an antidote.

Tom had scarcely finished his short survey, when the door of the bedroom opened, and Drysdale emerged in a loose jacket lined with silk, his velvet cap on his head, and otherwise gorgeously attired. He was a pleasant-looking fellow, of middle size, with dark hair, and a merry brown eye, with a twinkle in it which spoke well for his sense of humour; otherwise, his features were rather plain, but he had the look and manners of a thoroughly well-bred gentleman.

His first act, after nodding to Tom, was to seize on a pewter and resort to the cask in the corner, from whence he drew a pint or so of the contents, having, as he said, "a whoreson longing for that poor creature, small beer." We were playing Van-John in Blake's rooms till three last night, and he gave us devilled bones and mulled port. A fel-

low can't enjoy his breakfast after that without something to cool his coppers."

Tom was as yet ignorant of what Van-John might be, so held his peace, and took a pull at the beer which the other handed him; and then the scout entered, and received orders to bring up Jack and the breakfast, and not to wait for any one. In another minute, a bouncing and scrattling was heard on the stairs, and a white bulldog rushed in, a gem in his way; for his brow was broad and massive, and wrinkled about the eyes; his skin was as fine as a lady's, and his tail taper and nearly as thin as a clay pipe; but he had a way of going snuzzling about the calves of strangers which was not pleasant for nervous people. Tom, however, was used to dogs, and soon became friends with him, which evidently pleased his host. And then the breakfast arrived, all smoking, and with it the two other ingenious youths, in velvet caps and far more gorgeous apparel, so far as colours went, than Drysdale. They were introduced to Tom, who thought them somewhat ordinary and rather loud young gentlemen. One of them remonstrated vigorously against the presence of that confounded dog, and so Jack was sent to lie down in a corner, and then the four fell to work upon the breakfast.

It was a good lesson in gastronomy, but the results are scarcely worth repeating here. It is wonderful, though, how you feel drawn to a man who feeds you well; and, as Tom's appetite got less, his liking and respect for his host undoubtedly increased.

When they had nearly finished, in walked the Honourable Piers, a tall slight man, two or three years older than the rest of them; good-looking, and very well and quietly dressed, but with a drawing up of his nostril, and a drawing down of the corners of his mouth, which set Tom against him at once. The cool, supercilious half-nod, moreover, to which he treated our hero when introduced to him, was enough to spoil his digestion, and hurt his self-love a good deal more than he would have liked to own.

"Here, Henry," said the Honourable Piers to the scout in attendance, seating himself, and inspecting the half-cleared dishes; "what is there for my breakfast?"

Henry bustled about, and handed a dish or two.

"I don't want these cold things; haven't you kept me any gudgeon?"

"Why, sir," said Henry, "there was only two dozen this morning, and Mr. Drysdale told me to cook them all."

"To be sure I did," said Drysdale. "Just half a dozen for each of us four: they were first-rate. If you can't get here at half-past nine, you won't get gudgeon, I can tell you."

"Just go and get me a broil from the kitchen," said the Honourable Piers, without deigning an answer to Drysdale.

"Very sorry, sir; kitchen's shut by now, sir," answered Henry.

"Then go to Hinton's, and order some cutlets."

"I say, Henry," shouted Drysdale to the retreating scout; "not to my tick, mind! Put them down to Mr. St. Cloud."

Henry seemed to know very well that in that case he might save himself the trouble of the journey, and consequently returned to his waiting; and the Honourable Piers set to work upon his breakfast, without showing any further ill-temper certainly, except by the stinging things which he threw every now and then into the conversation, for the benefit of each of the others in turn.

Tom thought he detected signs of coming hostilities between his host and St. Cloud, for Drysdale seemed to prick up his ears and get combative whenever the other spoke, and lost no chance of roughing him in his replies. And, indeed, he wasn't far wrong; the fact being, that during Drysdale's first term, the other had lived on him—drinking his wine, smoking his cigars, driving his dog-cart, and winning his money; all which Drysdale, who was the easiest going and best tempered fellow in Oxford, would have stood without turning a hair; but St. Cloud added to these little favours a half patronizing, half

contemptuous manner, which he used with great success towards some of the other gentlemen-commoners, who thought it a mark of high breeding, and the correct thing, but which Drysdale, who didn't care three straws about knowing St. Cloud, wasn't going to put up with.

However, nothing happened beyond a little sparring, and the breakfast things were cleared away, and the tankards left on the table, and the company betook themselves to cigars and easy chairs; Jack coming out of his corner to be gratified with some of the remnants by his fond master, and then curling himself up on the sofa along which Drysdale lounged.

"What are you going to do to-day, Drysdale?" said one of the others. "I've ordered a leader sent on over the bridge, and mean to drive my dog-cart over, and dine at Abingdon. Won't you come?"

"Who's going besides?" asked Drysdale.

"Oh, only St. Cloud and Farley here. There's lots of room for a fourth."

"No, thank'ee; teaming's slow work on the back seat; besides, I've half-promised to go down in the boat."

"In the boat!" shouted the other. "Why you don't mean to say you're going to take to pulling?"

"Well, I don't know; I rather think I am. I'm dog-tired of driving and doing the High Street, and playing cards and billiards all day, and our boat is likely to be head of the river, I think."

"By Jove! I should as soon have thought of your taking to reading, or going to University Sermon," put in St. Cloud.

"And the boating-men, too," went on Farley; "did you ever see such a set, St. Cloud? with their everlasting flannels and jerseys, and hair cropped like prize-fighters."

"I'll bet a guinea there isn't one of them has more than £200 a-year," put in Chanter, whose father could just write his name, and was making a colossal fortune by supplying bad iron rails to the new railway companies.

"What the devil do I care," broke in Drysdale; "I know they're a deal more amusing than you fellows, who can do nothing that don't cost pounds."

"Getting economical!" sneered St. Cloud.

"Well, I don't see the fun of tearing one's heart out, and blistering one's hands, only to get abused by that little brute, Miller the coxswain," said Farley.

"Why you won't be able to sit straight in your chair for a month," said Chanter; "and the captain will make you dine at one, and fetch you out of anybody's rooms, confound his impudence, whether he knows them or not, at eleven o'clock every night."

"Two cigars a day, and a pint and a half of liquid," and Farley inserted his cod-fish face into the tankard; "fancy Drysdale on training allowance!"

Here a new comer entered in a bachelor's gown, who was warmly greeted by the name of Sanders by Drysdale. St. Cloud and he exchanged the coldest possible nods; and the other two, taking the office from their mentor, stared at him through their smoke, and, after a minute or two's silence, and a few rude, half-whispered remarks amongst themselves, went off to play a game at pyramids till luncheon time. Sanders took a cigar which Drysdale offered, and began asking him about his friends at home, and what he had been doing in the vacation.

They were evidently intimate, though Tom thought that Drysdale didn't seem quite at his ease at first, which he wondered at, as Sanders took his fancy at once. However, eleven o'clock struck, and Tom had to go off to lecture, where we cannot follow him just now, but must remain with Drysdale and Sanders, who chatted on very pleasantly for some twenty minutes, till a knock came at the door. It was not till the third summons that Drysdale shouted "Come in," with a shrug of his shoulders, and an impatient kick at the sofa-cushion at his feet, as though he were not half pleased at the approaching visit.

Reader! had you not ever a friend a few years older than yourself, whose good opinion you were anxious to keep? A fellow *teres atque rotundus*; who could do everything better than you, from Plato and tennis down to singing a comic song and playing quoits? If you have had, wasn't he always in your rooms or company whenever anything happened to show your little weak points? Sanders, at any rate, occupied this position towards our young friend Drysdale, and the latter, much as he liked Sanders's company, would have preferred it at any other time than on an idle morning just at the beginning of term, when the gentlemen tradesmen, who look upon undergraduates in general, and gentlemen-commoners in particular, as their lawful prey, are in the habit of calling in flocks.

The new arrival was a tall, florid man, with a half servile, half impudent, manner, and a foreign accent; dressed in sumptuous costume, with a velvet-faced coat, and a gorgeous plush waistcoat. Under his arm he carried a large parcel, which he proceeded to open, and placed upon a sofa the contents, consisting of a couple of coats, and three or four waistcoats and pairs of trousers. He saluted Sanders with a most obsequious bow, looked nervously at Jack, who opened one eye from between his master's legs and growled, and then, turning to Drysdale, asked if he should have the honour of seeing him try on any of the clothes?

"No; I can't be bored with trying them on now," said Drysdale; "leave them where they are."

Mr. Schloss would like very much on his return to town, in a day or two, to be able to assure his principals, that Mr. Drysdale's orders had been executed to his satisfaction. He had also some very beautiful new stuffs with him, which he should like to submit to Mr. Drysdale; and without more ado began unfolding cards of the most fabulous plushes and cloths.

Drysdale glanced first at the cards and then at Sanders, who sat puffing his cigar, and watching Schloss's pro-

ceedings with a look not unlike Jack's, when any one he did not approve of approached his master.

"Confound your patterns, Schloss," said Drysdale; "I tell you I've more things than I want already."

"The large stripe, such as these, is now very much worn for trousers in London," went on Schloss, without heeding the rebuff, and spreading his cards on the table.

"D—— trousers," replied Drysdale; "you seem to think, Schloss, that a fellow has ten pairs of legs."

"Monsieur is pleased to joke," smiled Schloss; "but, to be in the mode, gentlemen must have variety."

"Well, I won't order any now, that's flat," said Drysdale.

"Monsieur will do as he pleases; but it is impossible that he should not have some plush waistcoats; the fabric is only just out, and is making a sensation."

"Now look here, Schloss; will you go if I order a waistcoat?"

"Monsieur is very good; he sees how tasteful these new patterns are."

"I wouldn't be seen at a cock-fight in one of them; they're as gaudy as a salmon-fly," said Drysdale, feeling the stuff which the obsequious Schloss held out. "But it seems nice stuff, too," he went on; "I shouldn't mind having a couple of waistcoats of it of this pattern;" and he chucked across to Schloss a dark tartan waistcoat which was lying near him. "Have you got the stuff in that pattern?"

"Ah! no," said Schloss, gathering up the waistcoat; "but it shall not hinder. I shall have at once a loom for Monsieur set up in Paris."

"Set it up at Jericho if you like," said Drysdale; "and now go!"

"May I ask, Mr. Schloss," broke in Sanders, "what it will cost to set up the loom?"

"Ah! indeed, a trifle only; some twelve, or perhaps fourteen, pounds." Sanders gave a chuckle, and puffed away at his cigar.

"By Jove," shouted Drysdale, jerking himself into a sitting posture, and

upsetting Jack, who went trotting about the room, and snuffling at Schloss's legs; "do you mean to say, Schloss, you were going to make me waistcoats at fourteen guineas a-piece?"

"Not if Monsieur disapproves. Ah! the large hound is not friendly to strangers; I will call again when Monsieur is more at leisure." And Schloss gathered up his cards and beat a hasty retreat, followed by Jack with his head on one side, and casting an enraged look at Sanders, as he slid through the door.

"Well done, Jack, old boy!" said Sanders, patting him; "what a funk the fellow was in. Well, you've saved your master a pony this fine morning. Cheap dog you've got, Drysdale."

"D—the fellow," answered Drysdale, "he leaves a bad taste in one's mouth;" and he went to the table, took a pull at the tankard, and then threw himself down on the sofa again, and Jack jumped up and coiled himself round by his master's legs, keeping one half-open eye winking at him, and giving an occasional wag with the end of his taper tail.

Sanders got up, and began handling the new things. First he held up a pair of bright blue trousers, with a red stripe across them, Drysdale looking on from the sofa. "I say, Drysdale, you don't mean to say you really ordered these thunder-and-lightning affairs?"

"Heaven only knows," said Drysdale; "I daresay I did. I'd order a full suit cut out of my grandmother's farthingale to get that cursed Schloss out of my rooms sometimes."

"You'll never be able to wear them; even in Oxford the boys would mob you. Why don't you kick him down-stairs?" suggested Sanders, putting down the trousers, and turning to Drysdale.

"Well, I've been very near it once or twice; but, I don't know—my name's Easy—besides, I don't want to give up the beast altogether; he makes the best trousers in England."

"And these waistcoats," went on Sanders; "let me see; three light silk waistcoats, peach-colour, fawn-colour, and

lavender. Well, of course, you can only wear these at your weddings. You may be married the first time in the peach or fawn-colour; and then, if you've luck, and bury your first wife soon, it will be a delicate compliment to take to No. 2 in the lavender, that being half-mourning; but still, you see, we're in difficulty as to one of the three, either the peach or the fawn-colour—"

Here he was interrupted by another knock, and a boy entered from the fashionable tobacconist's in Oriel Lane, who had general orders to let Drysdale have his fair share of anything very special in the cigar line. He deposited a two-pound box of cigars at three guineas the pound on the table, and withdrew in silence.

Then came a boot-maker with a new pair of top-boots, which Drysdale had ordered in November, and had forgotten next day. This artist, wisely considering that his young patron must have plenty of tops to last him through the hunting season (he himself having supplied three previous pairs in October), had retained the present pair for show in his window; and every one knows that boots wear much better for being kept some time before use. Now, however, as the hunting season was drawing to a close, and the place in the window was wanted for spring stock, he judiciously sent in the tops, merely adding half-a-sovereign or so to the price for interest on his outlay since the order. He also kindly left on the table a pair of large plated spurs to match the boots.

It never rains but it pours. Sanders sat smoking his cigar in provoking silence, while knock succeeded knock, and tradesman followed tradesman; each depositing some article ordered, or supposed to have been ordered, or which ought in the judgment of the depositors to have been ordered, by the luckless Drysdale; and new hats, and ties, and gloves, and pins jostled balsam of Neroli, and registered shaving-soap, and fancy letter-paper, and eau de Cologne, on every available table. A visit from two livery-stable-keepers in succession followed,

each of whom had several new leaders which they were anxious Mr. Drysdale should try as soon as possible. Drysdale growled and grunted, and wished them or Sanders at the bottom of the sea; however, he consoled himself with the thought that the worst was now past,—there was no other possible supplier of undergraduate wants who could arrive.

Not so; in another minute a gentle knock came at the door; Jack pricked up his ears and wagged his tail; Drysdale recklessly shouted, "Come in!" and the door slowly opened about eighteen inches, and a shock head of hair entered the room, from which one lively little gimlet eye went glancing about into every corner; the other eye was closed, but whether as a perpetual wink to indicate the unsleeping wariness of the owner, or because that hero had really lost the power of using it in some of his numerous encounters with men and beasts, no one, so far as I know, has ever ascertained.

"Ah! Mr. Drysdale, sir!" began the head; and then rapidly withdrew behind the door, to avoid one of the spurs, which (being the missile nearest at hand) Drysdale instantly discharged at it. As the spur fell to the floor, the head reappeared in the room, and as quickly disappeared again, in deference to the other spur, the top boots, an ivory-handled hair-brush, and a translation of Euripides, which in turn saluted each successive appearance of said head; and the grin was broader on each re-appearance.

Then Drysdale, having no other article within reach which he could throw, burst into a loud fit of laughter, in which Sanders and the head heartily joined, and shouted, "Come in, Joe, you old fool! and don't stand bobbing your ugly old mug in and out there, like a jack in the box."

So the head came in, and after it the body, and closed the door behind it; and a queer cross-grained, tough-looking body it was, of about fifty years standing, or rather slouching, clothed in old fustian coat, and corduroy breeches and

gaiters, and being the earthly tabernacle of Joe Muggles, the dog-fancier of St. Aldate's.

"How the deuce did you get by the lodge, Joe?" inquired Drysdale. Joe, be it known, had been forbidden the college for importing a sack of rats into the inner quadrangle, upon the turf of which a match at rat-killing had come off between the terriers of two gentlemen-commoners. This little event might have passed unnoticed, but that Drysdale had bought from Joe a dozen of the slaughtered rats, and nailed them on the doors of the four college tutors, three to a door; whereupon inquiry had been made, and Joe had been outlawed.

"Oh, please Mr. Drysdale, sir, I just watched the 'ed porter, sir, across to the buttery to get his mornin', and then I tips the wink to the under-porter (pal o' mine, sir, the under-porter) and makes a run of it right up."

"Well, you'll be quod'ed if you're caught! Now, what do you want?"

"Why, you see, Mr. Drysdale, sir," said Joe, in his most insinuating tone, "my mate hev' got a old dog brock, sir, from the Heythrop kennel, and Honble Wernham, sir, of New Inn 'All, sir, he've jist been down our yard with a fighting chap from town, Mr. Drysdale—in the fancy, sir, he is, and hev got a matter of three dogs down w' un, stoppin at Milky Bill's. And he says, says he, Mr. Drysdale, as arra one of he's dogs 'll draw the old un three times, while arra Oxford dog 'll draw un twice, and Honble Wernham chaffs as how he'll back un for a fi'pun note;"—and Joe stopped to caress Jack, who was fawning on him as if he understood every word.

"Well, Joe, what then?" said Drysdale.

"So you see, Mr. Drysdale, sir," went on Joe, fondling Jack's muzzle, "my mate says, says he, 'Jack's the dog as can draw a brock,' says he, 'agin any Lonnun dog as ever was whelped; and Mr. Drysdale,' says he, 'aint the man as 'd see two poor chaps bounced out of their honest name by arra town chap, and a

fi'pun note's no more to he, for the matter o' that, than to Honble Wernham his self,' says my mate."

"So I'm to lend you Jack for a match, and stand the stakes?"

"Well, Mr. Drysdale, sir, that was what my mate was a sayin'."

"You're cool hands, you and your mate," said Drysdale; "here, take a drink, and get out, and I'll think about it." Drysdale was now in a defiant humour, and resolved not to let Sanders think that his presence could keep him from any act of folly which he was minded to.

Joe took his drink; and just then several men came in from lecture, and

drew off Drysdale's attention from Jack, who quietly followed Joe out of the room, when that worthy disappeared. Drysdale only laughed when he found it out, and went down to the yard that afternoon to see the match between the London dog and his own pet.

"How in the world are youngsters with unlimited credit, plenty of ready money, and fast tastes, to be kept from making fools and blackguards of themselves up here," thought Sanders as he strolled back to his college. And it is a question which has exercised other heads besides his, and probably is a long way yet from being well solved.—*To be continued.*

PAPER, PEN AND INK:

AN EXCURSUS IN TECHNOLOGY.

BY PROFESSOR GEORGE WILSON.

MANY years ago, when I was young, I was told by a preceptor that, when asking for writing materials, I should request Paper, Pen, and Ink—not Pen, Ink, and Paper; Ink, Paper, and Pen; or the three scriptorial essentials in any other order than that first named. I have since been told that the second formula was more in accordance with modern etiquette; but I was taught to prefer the first. No reason, so far as I remember, was given for this rule, which I never had formal occasion to apply. It seemed to me, when I first heard it, to be merely a conventional arrangement of words, built as much on a basis of euphony, as on a recognition of the relative importance of the things named. Yet it appeared to regard their importance also, and to imply that he who proposed to write should first provide himself with *paper*, then look out for a *pen*, and lastly make search at his leisure for *ink*. I frequently put to myself these questions, Was it intended by this mode of asking to signify that the *paper* was a more important writing-material than the *pen*, and the *pen* than the *ink*; and further, would the idioms

of all the civilized nations of the world be found sanctioning a similar arrangement of words, and for the reasons supposed? But in trying to answer these questions I was thrown back on the still more fundamental problem, What in its fullest sense is the idea conveyed in the respective words, Paper, Pen and Ink? And again, What is the relative importance, as graphic or scriptorial materials, of the things represented by them? A little reflection showed that the points of view from which these questions could be looked at were so many, and so different, that no two nations, and perhaps no two individuals, were likely to answer them in the same way; and that to press for an unanimous judgment would be foolish and useless. At the same time there could be no harm in seeking to reach an individual conclusion, and the one to which I was led in the course of a somewhat erratic excursus is here offered with due deference to the reader.

The names of the three chief writing materials—Paper, Pen, and Ink—are typical or representative. *Paper* represents all the receptive materials of graphic

art ; in a word, every surface or body on which we can paint, write, print, carve, inscribe, or otherwise impress the portraits of visible things, the pictures of imagined objects, and the signs or symbols which constitute written language. The *Pen* represents every graphic tool by which such painting, writing, printing, carving, inscribing, or impressing is effected. *Ink* represents every tint, shadow, or colour which is employed to render more true to nature, more significant, or more visible, the work of the graphic tool on the receptive material. At first sight it seems the least essential of the graphic three ; for, with the manifest exception of the pictorial representation of coloured objects, it may be dispensed with, and yet leave to the blind a great part of written language open to a full interpretation and a free use. Nevertheless, colour in its graphic relations can be placed little, if at all, below its two sisters, for the blind assuredly are greatly hindered in their interpretation and employment of written characters by the invisibility of the latter to them ; and those who do see are immensely assisted in reading and writing by the colour of the symbols before them. In truth, even where we seem to dispense with colour, as in engraved or sculptured letters, in reality we introduce it, by placing them so that they are unequally illuminated, and the place of ink is supplied by shadows.

It should thus seem, that, passing by for the time with affectionate sympathy the privations of the blind, we must assign to each visible graphic material an equality of value. And such is our general and surely our wise estimate. The purest and most spotless of tablets, the finest and boldest of pens, the richest and deepest of colours, should all come together when some great graphic work must be done. Yet, often, all the three cannot be marshalled side by side ; nay, when the necessity for their use is greatest, there may be as many as two of them wanting. Strangely, however, it sometimes happens that one of them can for a time discharge the duties of all three. The olive leaf

which Noah's dove brought back to the Ark, was for it, paper, pen and ink ; and Noah had no difficulty in reading the statement on the leaf, that "the waters were abated from off the earth." The branch which floated past Columbus as he went sailing westward was a whole folio in Nature-printing upon the trees of America : and of the rainbow which spans the sky the complaint of the nations has ever been, only that it is an illuminated missal, which in a moment so gracefully crowds itself with inscription upon inscription that they are able to read but a few lines in the thick clustered paragraphs.

We cannot hope, however, like the Diluvian dove, to unite the whole three unless on rare occasions, or be certain that our writing will be read by eyes as sagacious as those of the Patriarch. The examples we have given are all indeed Divine, in invention and application. To us nevertheless is not denied the power of putting two at least of the graphic requisites together. This has been done from the first. A bit of charcoal, or a piece of chalk, or a black-lead pencil, is *pen and ink* in one. The photographer's sensitive plate is *paper and ink* in one. The dyer's mordanted tissue is *paper and pen* in one : and we deal with *paper, pen and ink* in one, when we count upon our fingers, and when the dumb and the blind, placing their hands together, write in invisible ink on each other's palms.

Any one of the three can thus on occasion be dispensed with, so that no one seemingly can claim precedence of the others. Considered in themselves, therefore, they may be represented by an equilateral triangle, of which the three equal sides are paper, pen, and ink. When we look, however, at their practical employment, we find that it has always been a much more difficult thing for mankind to furnish themselves with the first two than with the last. They are better symbolised, therefore, by an isosceles triangle, of which the two equal and longer sides are the paper and pen, and the unequal side, a very little shorter, is the ink. Moreover, when

they are in active, diversified use, their true symbol is a scalene triangle, of which the ink is generally the shortest side, whilst sometimes the paper, sometimes the pen is the longest. Thus to the sculptor the chisel-pen is the long side. To the sailor steering by night, the colour-ink of the red lighthouse lamp. To the blind-mute the living paper of his hand. To the printer, again, the triangle is barely scalene, and even sometimes seems equilateral.

The world of graphic and scriptorial art is thus, as it were, entered by a gateway, of which the two tall side pillars or jambs are the paper and pen, and the shorter lintel crossing them is the ink.

Let us stand before this porch which leads into a land of wonders, and admire one by one its triple components. We will exalt each in turn, and praise each to the fullest, beginning with the right-hand pillar named PAPER, and giving it for the time the amplest pre-eminence.

No wonder the scribe asks first for paper! The pen does its work, and perishes in doing it. The ink forgets the lines in which it was guided, unless the paper grasps it and fixes it. The enduringness of the graphic work is in the guardianship of the paper. The nations have tried in turn many kinds of paper, but have preferred from the beginning until now, and will to the end of time prefer, one kind to all others.

Stones have been touched by the finger of God into Tables of the Law. Rocks riven by lightning and smoothed by the glacier have been ploughed by the chisel into the Doomesday Books and annals and almanacks of nations. The hardest of gems has furrowed below the harder steel into words of awe and wisdom. Every metal, from the dull lead to the shining gold, has submitted to bear some sign or inscription. The sand on the sea-shore has been written on between tide and tide. The clay of the field has acknowledged the stamp,

No. 1.

and bound itself by the ordeal of fire to proclaim the truth entrusted to it, so long as it endured. All the unliving things of the sleeping mineral world, except the wild sea and the viewless air, have served man as paper. On all of them he has written his thoughts, and where he had a great thought to express, one material has sufficed for its expression nearly as well as another. From the once living world he has borrowed the flat bones of dead animals as writing tablets; the tusks of wild elephants he has converted into drawing boards; and the skins of many creatures have served him as parchment.

But especially has he gathered from dead plants. When "by desire of power the angels fell, and men by that of knowledge," as Bacon reminds us they did, it was in the shape of a tree that the coveted knowledge of good and evil rose before our first mother. And with a tree the literature of every highly-civilised people inseparably connects itself, preserving by such terms as *library*, *codex*, *folio*, and *leaf*, its recognition of the peculiar indebtedness of mankind to plants for what we, *par excellence*, style paper. And can it be the blood of Eve stirring in our veins, that makes us turn from even the most suitable of those dead papers, and find such delight as we do in carving the names of those we love upon the bark of living trees? Strange practice, with its absurd as well as its poetical side! In the Museum of Kew Gardens I have stopped once and again to gaze at a strange and touching memorial of the fidelity with which a living tree will preserve, and even perpetuate by reproduction, the record confided to it. On the inner *liber*, or book-bark, some one, a century or more ago, has carved two letters of the alphabet, probably the initials of a name, with a date attached. Long since the carver has died into dust, but the tree, faithful to its charge, has not only preserved the letters unharmed, but, as if they were dear to the Hamadryad who dwelt in its branches, has slowly drawn a veil of bark over the inscription, and made a copy of the letters in relief upon this cover!

From such records on the living pages of unconscious leafy organisms, I find myself unavoidably led a step higher, to gaze at that strangest of all papers, the bodies of living men! There are nice discussions in historical works as to the date of the first English paper-mill, and whether British paper is older than the days of Queen Elizabeth. Queen Elizabeth! Say, rather, Queen Boadicea, or, far beyond her, select Queen Anonyma, who reigned in pre-historic times. Our ancestors wrote on their fair skins, in native woad or indigo, what they sought to put on record, and for I know not how many thousand years the practice has prevailed down to our own day. It is dying out, yet it still continues among soldiers and sailors, and for a touching reason.

The sailor imprints his name in indecipherable characters on his arm, that, should the fate which every moment hangs over him, overtake him, and the gnawing sea-monster or the wasting sea-wave disfigure him beyond recognition, perchance the words on his limb will secure him Christian burial on shore, and save mother, or sister, or wife, or sweetheart at home from being

— "doomed to bear
The hope that keeps alive despair."

The sailors, true to the tradition of their sea-cradle, mark their arms with blue. The soldiers use gunpowder; and I have seen one wild mercenary fighter who preferred the blood-red vermillion. He had been at the Retreat from Moscow, and had fought at Austerlitz, Jena, and Waterloo. With his life appraised by himself at a shilling a day, he shrank from a nameless sepulchre, and had printed his name (Joseph Jankowski) on his flesh, that, though robbed after death of all else, he might still have the chance of falling into the hands of his comrades, and be laid in a soldier's grave.

Affecting as such memorials are, they are, like a last will and testament, not intended to come into operation till after death, and they have no force while the testator liveth. From them I rise in thought to that living writing

paper which is in use all throughout life, and is useless after death; without which all other papers presented to the eye are valueless, and possessed of which, all others can be dispensed with. That living paper is within the eye; anatomists call it the retina. It is a faint and filmy web, finer than the finest tissue paper, exquisitely sensitive, good for every graphic art; the best of writing paper, drawing paper, music paper; the only paper, indeed, good for scriptorial or artistic purposes. Yes! Sculpture and carve as you will, engrave and write, paint and print, on whatever you please, you execute but outlines and rough drafts, and the final touching, correcting and printing are done when the transfer is made to the living eye-paper. The Egyptian might write on basalt, the Hebrew on gems, the Assyrian on alabaster, the Greek on marble and ivory, the Etruscan on clay, the Venetian on glass, the Anglo-Saxon on iron, and all the peoples of the world on endless stone and metal, wood and other surfaces, but these are in every case only what the printer or engraver calls proofs or revises. The final printing-room is the eye; there the only impressions which are seen are struck off. All previous printings are rejected, or, rather, of themselves cease to be; neither are first proofs, outline designs, or rough drafts essentially necessary. The telegraph needle swaying in the air, the revolving handles on the clock-dial, the time-ball falling, write and print *directly* on the retina-paper. And the fewer the printings and transfers, the fewer the mistakes.

To the eye-paper must be transferred all that has been written on paper of any other kind, before it can be read or interpreted; and if the writing can be directly inscribed on the retina-sheet, all intermediate papers are worse than useless. Beyond this we cannot go. At every moment a new sheet of this choicest nerve-paper is spread within the eye to receive a new inscription. With lightning speed the soul deciphers it, and the paper is changed.

So much for the Paper; and now we turn to the left pillar of our porch and ask, Is the PEN of equal eminence with the paper, and worthy to be called its peer? Who shall deny that it is? for if all other papers ultimately resolve themselves into the retina-paper of the eye, what is a pen but a living finger, or more fully, a living hand? When a dumb man speaks to another, moving his fingers before him, we have writing reduced to its simplest conditions. With his finger as a pen he writes through the air on the retina-paper of his neighbour's eye. It is true that he generally uses both hands, and the one is sometimes taking the place of the paper on which the other writes. But the two are not needed. The experience of electric telegraphy has shown, that the motion of two fingers of one hand would suffice for the spelling of every word in our language, letter by letter.

We rise but one step in complexity when we reach the Eastern schoolmaster, sitting cross-legged among his cross-legged pupils, each with busy finger inscribing numerals on the sand, and asking no intermediate pen or pencil to facilitate his calculations. The Egyptian and Greek of old practised their geometry in the same simple way, and æsthetical travellers like Bayard Taylor expatiate on the beauty of the devices which the wandering Chinese artist produces, with his wetted forefinger and a little colouring matter, on a tablet of porcelain, or any smooth surface that comes in his way. And if we use in addition to our hands certain implements which we call pens, it is because we must often write for eyes distant from us in space, and distant in time; must send messages to friends on the other side of the globe, and make records for generations yet unborn. Therefore, as our hands are not long enough or strong enough, or our finger-nails sharp enough, and as the blood in our veins cannot be shed from our finger-tips as ink at a distance, we arm these hands with what we call pens; but the power is in the hand, not in the pen, and anything will almost do for one.

It was a foolish wish of the poet's, "O! for a pen plucked from a seraph's wing!" What good could that do him? Had he asked the loan of the seraph's living hand, there would have been wisdom in the request. If the seraphic power be in the poet, the smallest humming-bird's quill will serve to give it expression; and if that power be wanting, he will write as a weakling even with a seraph's pen-feather. A man's hand is his pen, and, as necessity demands, he supplements its shortcomings now by one weapon or tool, now by another. A sword is sometimes the best pen; sometimes an axe; sometimes a chisel; sometimes a needle; a bit of copper; an iron wire; a piece of loadstone; a lump of chalk; a metal punch; a burned stick; a split reed or feather; a bundle of bristles; a drop of chemical liquid; a ray of light; a ray of darkness. In so far then as these and all other pens but supplement the hand, which is the true pen, I place it side by side with the eye, the true paper.

On each of those, and all the other supplementary pens, I would willingly linger. Volumes might be written on them. The *Burnt Stick*, the pen of common humanity, of which the pencil and the writing pen are simple modifications! The *Brush*, the fine-art pen, equivalent to the burnt stick changed from the rigid immobility, which was all that prosaic reality needed, into the pliant hair-tassel, obedient to every motion of the idealist's hand! The *Chisel*, the architect's and sculptor's lithographic pen, with which cathedrals and Sebastopols are written in granite, and gods and men in marble! The *Printer's Type*, the pen of civilization, with which nation speaks to nation, and, in these latter days, God speaks to all men! The *Electric Telegraph*, the world's shorthand pen, which strings together the cities of the globe like beads upon its wire, and makes it the same time of day with them all! The *Actinic Ray*, nature's photographic pen, with which the stars write to each other; the newest, and, in some respects most wonderful of pens which man has acquired! All those

deserve notice, but to the last alone I shall refer. It has this peculiarity about it, that it is rather lent to us than made by us for ourselves; and some of its most wonderful work is done without the interference of human hands. Of all its astonishing and everyday increasing wonders, as guided by man, none perhaps is more marvellous than its power to confer perpetual youth upon everything around us. The stars of heaven, the beautiful faces upon earth, the glories of the sea and sky, it transfers for us to abiding tablets, and multiplies to infinity. Familiarity has already deadened us to the value of these memorials; yet it is very great. All the visible historical monuments of the world are by it, in an important sense, rendered imperishable. The features of the planets, the inconstant moon herself, the mighty mountains of the globe, the famous buildings of all nations, their great pictures, their great sculptures, their rare manuscripts, have now the seal of immortality set upon them by light. The Pyramids may crumble down, the ruins of the Parthenon waste utterly away, the Transfiguration and the Crucifixion resolve themselves into dust, and every manuscript of the Bible and writing of the ancient world fade into irrecoverable blankness; nevertheless, we shall possess the power of recalling and reproducing them in almost absolute facsimile; and, though that does not warrant the least neglect of the originals, it supplies a consolation for the loss which some day must bring, such as none of our forefathers had.

A friend has described to me the speechless amazement with which a wild Arab Chief of the Desert watched, in a tent near Cairo, the development of a photograph of the Great Sphinx. When in the faint light, the glass taken, as it seemed, unchanged from the camera, and subjected thereafter to a simple baptism, began to reveal line by line the well-known features of the mysterious sculpture, the Arab turned to my informant, and, pointing to the photographer, exclaimed, "He is the eldest son of Satan!"

With the Arab's wonder we should profoundly sympathize, although it is not from the hands of the Prince of Darkness that we will take the pencil of light. It speaks for itself as one of the choicest gifts of God reserved for us in these latter days. With this feeling I have found myself in a dream of the night, among the spirits of the great dead in the silent land, myself clothed in flesh and blood, a visitant for the briefest space from this upper world. There could be no speech between us; but to their longing looks for information regarding that world from which they had come, and to which they could not return, methought I replied by laying before the pale conclave the shadowy photographs which were in my hands. And the ancient Egyptian saw that the Pyramids would waste no more; and the Greek was consoled that the ruin of his temples could proceed no further, and knew that at length a Prometheus had come, who with the very fire of heaven had made each marble form immortal; and the Italian painter ceased to sigh at the fading of his frescoes; and the Mediæval architect mourned no longer over his cathedral falling before those fierce Iconoclasts, the Lightning and the North Wind, the Snow and the Rain; and the ancient Christian who, in the scriptorium of his convent, centuries ago, had reverently copied, letter by letter, every jot and tittle of the venerable Evangel before him, felt that the days of faithful copying had come back again—nay, were exceeded in faithfulness—and realized that to the end of time his labour might not prove in vain. And over all the spiritual faces a gleam of shadowy sunshine passed, as I awoke and behold it was a dream.

This pencil of light, however, is ours only in loan. Nature is every day, and all the day, employing it herself, not only writing transiently on the retina of every eye, but abidingly upon every object. Every shadow is a piece of Nature—writing, Nature—printing; sometimes like a pencil-note upon a slate, rubbed out next moment; often like the carving of a gem destined to

endure for ages. These shadows have a strange power of fixing themselves, and, could we interpret them, we should find them furnish the Sun's Diary or Record of his daily work upon earth. As it is, we scarcely recognise the existence of such a solar journal, still less endeavour to translate it. Yet daily it is issued, and there are evening journals also. The Moon not only

"... nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth ;"

but leaves the tokens of her track wherever she passes ; and each of the stars walking in darkness keeps some chronicle of all that its bright eye has seen during the silent watches of the night. It may be difficult at first to believe this, when we learn what pains it costs to obtain photographs of the heavenly bodies ; but the difficulty is mainly occasioned by the swiftness with which they travel, and this does not hinder them from writing on tablets of their own choosing. How strangely they write, may in some respects be realized by one example of their art. An amateur astronomer, resident in Ireland, was in the constant practice of using a fine reflecting telescope. On one occasion he neglected, on ceasing his observations, to put the cap over the mouth or object glass of the instrument, so that the light was free to enter the tube and fall on the polished metal reflector. He was taken ill that day, soon became worse, and in the end died. For weeks, if not for months after his death, his study remained locked as he had left it on the first day of his illness. All this time the telescope stood with its mouth pointed to a distant church with a stately spire. Every day the sun peeped in to see if he were wanted ; every clear night the moon and the stars offered their services, and, as no other work was asked from them, they drew the church spire and surrounding landscape on the mirror of the telescope as they made their rounds.

At length the observatory was opened, the telescope taken down, and behold, upon its mirror a permanent picture of

the church spire and the objects around it ! The mirror had tarnished and rusted, but the light determined where the rusting should occur, and where the metal should remain bright, and employed the rust as if it were ink to furnish the shadows.

The sun, the moon and the stars are writing in the same fashion every day on every surface. The pens which they use are of amazing length. I have elsewhere called the electric pen the long pen, and it is by far the longest earthly pen ; but it is a mere stump or pencil-point when compared in length to the pen which the sun stretches through space to us ; and the sun's pen is nothing in length to those with which more distant suns write upon the earth, across the vast abysses of space. These are the oldest as well as longest, and among the swiftest of pens. The mode in which the dust settles on a floor or a wall, the gathering of the dew on the leaves of a flower, the fading of colour from a carpet or a curtain, are all determined by those wondrous beams of solar and abyssal light, which draw and paint upon the globe with catholic impartiality every object which presents itself to their pencils. At present most of us are indifferent to those wondrous pictures ; we blot them out almost before they are executed, and do not appreciate them even when we preserve them. But we are quickly learning better, and in our meteorological observatories the swift and unerring pen of light is now from moment to moment chronicling for us in indelible ink the magnetic, barometric, thermometric, electric, and other fluctuations of the great physical forces of the universe.

Thus much of the Pen, the active member of the graphic triad, an extension of the hand, the symbol and instrument of man's intelligent energy. It is the equal, with a difference, of the Paper, the negative member of the triad, and simply receptive like the eye, of which it is an extension. Of the Ink, the connecting lintel of the gatepillars we have been considering, and to

which we now turn, we cannot say so much; but we must not say too little. It is of somewhat less importance than the other two, as it can be more easily dispensed with. But though we can scarcely mark paper with even our finger-nail, and not leave a trace in some degree visible, yet we must not think lightly of the ink which we seem not to miss. Intermediate between the positive active pen and the negative receptive paper, it often appears to us in the act of writing more important than either, and as the really potential graphic agent. If they represent the Eye and the Hand, it represents the Heart. The paper is before us, the pen in our hand, mere mechanical media as it seems; but the ink quickens and slackens its current, and ebbs and flows, as the tide of our emotions sinks and swells. In reality the pen is as sympathetic, as we feel when it takes the shape of the pencil; but the latter is only employed for temporary scriptorial purposes, and a liquid ink is used for all important writings.

Of particular inks there is no room to speak, as we did of particular pens and papers. Charcoal furnishes with water a black ink for white paper, and chalk with water a white ink for black paper. The latter is most familiar to us in its form of the solid chalk and black board of the public teacher; but common paper is only wood-fibre ground down, and made up again into a solid, and differs from the board only in thickness; and, with a board, a crayon is more convenient than liquid ink would be, especially as it must often be used alternately as drawing pencil and writing pen. In all cases, however, an ink ultimately resolves itself into a dried-up colour: and if we compare inks dry, we can justly affirm that chalk and charcoal have been the two great graphic instructors of the world. The briefer daily lessons have been written in chalk; the germinal sketches of great works in art—paintings, sculptures, palaces—have been drawn with it. The abiding records, again, of all that concerns the teaching of the nations have

been embodied in charcoal. The most famous ancient books and many modern ones have been written with charcoal and water; and, when they are rewritten a million times by the printer's type, it is with charcoal and oil. The artists of all ages have designed with charcoal; and the engraver, the lithographer, and even the photographer, fall back upon it when they would multiply and perpetuate special designs.

Any coloured liquid, however, will suffice for ink; any flower-juice, any dye-stuff, the blood from any vein, a multitude of chemical compounds. They are not equally good, but any one is sufficiently so for an emergency; and if the paper and pen are secured, the ink is certain to be forthcoming. But whatever its material quality be, how little this strikes us when our hearts are stirred, and the words we have written stand before us, no longer thoughts which we can recall, but each a spirit-child with an independent life of its own, proclaiming "*Litera scripta manet.*" The functions of the paper and pen in producing this result are forgotten. We feel as if we directly thought out the words we see. The ink in which they stand is not charcoal, or galls and iron, but the very anger, or sorrow, or gladness we felt, fixed on the paper for ever.

Think of a queen's first signature of a death-warrant, where tears tried to blanch the fatal blackness of the doom-ing ink! Of a traitor's adhesion to a deed of rebellion, written in gall: of a forger's trembling imitation of another's writing, where each letter took the shape of the gallows: of a lover's passionate proposal written in fire: of a proud girl's refusal written in ice: of a mother's dying expostulation with a wayward son written in her heart's blood: of an indignant father's disinheriting curse on his first-born, black with the lost colour of the grey hairs which shall go down in sorrow to the grave:—think of these, and of all the other impassioned writings to which every hour gives birth, and what a strangely potent, Protean thing, a drop of ink grows to be! All over the world it is distilling

at the behest of men. Here a despairing prisoner is writing with a rusty nail his dying confession of faith on his damp dungeon-wall. There an anxious lover is deceiving all but his bride, with an ink which only she knows how to render visible. Beleaguered soldiers in Indian forts are confiding to the perilous secrecy of rice water or innocent milk their own lives and the fortunes of their country. Shipwrecked sailors, about to be engulfed in mid ocean, are consigning to a floating bottle the faint pencil-memorandum of the spot where they will swiftly go down into the jaws of Death. Everywhere happy pairs, dear husbands and wives, affectionate brothers and sisters, and all the busy world, are writing to each other on endless topics, with whatever paper comes to hand, whatever pen, whatever ink! The varied stream thus for ever flowing is the intellectual and emotional blood of the world, and no one need visit Egypt, or summon an Eastern magician, to show him all the acts, all the joys and woes of men reflected from the mirror of a drop of Ink.

When Paper, Pen, and Ink have made the tour of the world, and have carried everywhere the acknowledgment of brotherhood between people and people, and man and man, and, the song of Bethlehem fulfilled to the full, has enlightened every intellect, and softened every heart, their great mission will be ended. And let us not complain that our writing materials are one and all so frail and perishable, for God himself has been content to write His will on the frailest things. Even His choicest graphic media are temporal and perishable. The stars of heaven are in our eyes the emblems of eternity, and they are the letters in God's alphabet of the universe, and we have counted them everlasting. Great astronomers of old have told us that the sidereal system could

not stop, but must for ever go on printing in light its cyclical record of the firmament. But in our own day and amongst ourselves has arisen a philosopher* to show us, as a result simply of physical forces working as we observe them do, that the lettered firmament of heaven will one day see all its scattered stars fall like the ruined type-setting of a printer into one mingled mass. Already the most distant stars, like the outermost sentinels of a flock of birds, have heard the signal of sunset and return, and have begun to gather closer together and turn their faces homewards. Millions of years must elapse before that home is reached and the end comes, but that end is sure. God alone is eternal, and they who through His gift are partakers of his immortality.

It is wonderful to find a patient mechanical philosopher, looking only to what his mathematics can educe from the phenomena of physical science, using words which without exaggeration are exactly equivalent to these: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same and thy years shall not fail."

If God's Paper, Pen, and Ink are thus perishable, shall we complain that ours do not endure? It is the writer that shall be immortal, not the writing.

* Professor William Thomson, of Glasgow. His researches and speculations on this and kindred points will be found in a series of papers communicated within the last ten years to the Transactions of the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh. General readers will find the subject treated in a very interesting way in a lecture by the learned German, Elenholts, published in English by Professor Tyndall, in the *London and Edinburgh Philosophical Magazine*, for 1856, p. 496.

COBBETT; OR, A RURAL RIDE.

BY GEORGE STOVIN VENABLES, AND THE LATE HENRY LUSHINGTON.

THIS poem was composed about the year 1838, and printed, but not published, in 1848, soon after Mr. Lushington had left England for Malta, where he had accepted the office of chief secretary to the Government.* The following advertisement, prefixed to the little volume of Joint Compositions, contains an accurate account of the manner in which the poems were composed:—

"The Poems which form this little volume are entitled, in the strictest sense of the words, to be called Joint Compositions. They were produced in conversation; a line suggested by one of the writers in his turn was often completed by the other; and there is scarcely a passage in any of them which either could recognise as exclusively his own. The poems are now printed for the amusement of some of those who may be acquainted with either or both of the writers. A vague intention of adding to their number long existed; but a continuation of the plan has finally become impracticable:

ἐπειὴ μὲν πολλὰ μεταξὺ
οὐρὰν τε σκιδέντα, θάλασσαν τε ἤχησεν.

The title of the poem is taken from the "Rural Rides" of Cobbett, and most of the allusions are borrowed from his writings. The scenery will be recognised by those who happen to be familiar with the London road which crosses the chalk hills of Kent into the vale beyond Farningham and Wrotham. It is not improbable that Cobbett may have followed the same direction in some of his political or agricultural tours, but his local observations, though in a high degree graphic and characteristic, are seldom interrupted

* A Memoir of Mr. Lushington, by Mr. Venables, is prefixed to a recent volume, entitled "The Italian War, 1848-9, and the Last Italian Poet: Three Essays, by the late Henry Lushington, Chief Secretary to the Government of Malta." Macmillan & Co.

by descriptions of landscape. The character which is ascribed in the poem to Cobbett is perhaps not the less just because it corresponds rather with his language than with his life. From his youth upwards an adventurer and a political agitator, he was by no means exempt from the hardness and indirectness which ordinarily belong to his calling. Of his higher qualities—his courage, his wit, and his mastery of popular style—he was amusingly and ostentatiously conscious, and he sometimes traded as a writer on his intimate knowledge of homely English life, and on his hearty sympathy with all its prejudices and associations. With the true instinct of egotistical genius, he idealized all his own tendencies and qualities, and the character which he affected was, on one side, that of an honest English yeoman, while at the same time he relieved his occasional obliquities and his numerous antipathies, by humorous exaggeration, and by extraordinary fertility of familiar illustration.

It is not perhaps surprising that as a politician Cobbett should almost be forgotten. The controversies of his time are obsolete, and he contributed little or nothing to the political and economical doctrines which have since been generally adopted. His attacks were, at the time, rendered more effective by their unflinching personality, and from the one-sided view which he deliberately took of every public question. Even when his opponents were wholly in the wrong, Cobbett took care never to be absolutely in the right. It was his business to point out fallacies, to make his enemies ridiculous, and, above all, to represent, for the time, the prejudices and opinions of some particular section of the community. In his long life of pugnacity he had the satisfaction of making himself troublesome to Pitt, odious to the Whigs, and vexatious to Peel, whom,

with his habitual faculty for nicknames, he denounced as "Peel's-Bill Peel." It was a proof of the originality and fundamental independence of his character, that he courted unnecessary odium by his special hatred to many of the classes in which he might have expected to find support and popularity. He libelled in turn, with all the vigour of personal animosity, the Jews, the Methodists, the Quakers, the Philhellenists, and the new school of agriculturists, whom he called "bull-frog farmers." After his residence in America, he never failed to abuse Yankees and slaveholders; he had a genuine dislike of political economists, and of *feel-anthropists*, as he called them; and at one period of his life he professed to dislike walking through the streets on Saturdays, because he was annoyed by "the Jews blaspheming in their Synagogues." As a demagogue, or a speculator, he never attained the prosperity which would perhaps have been ill-suited to his genius and his peculiar humour. He had been a gardener's boy, a private soldier, a farmer, a bookseller, and a voluminous author; and he died a Member of the House of Commons. No man could have enjoyed greater notoriety while he lived, and he probably troubled himself little with thoughts of posthumous fame.

It would be well worth the while of some competent editor to form a selection from Cobbett's multifarious writings. Since Swift, from whom he derived his style, there has been no more remarkable writer of terse, idiomatic English, and especially of the language of vituperation. When he was seeking work in Kew Gardens, at ten years old, he slept under a haystack, reading the "Tale of a Tub" as long as daylight lasted. His mind was not reserved or thoughtful enough to appropriate the irony of his great master; but in the "Political Register" there are lampoons as bitter, and almost as forcible and witty, as those of Swift himself. In his miscellaneous writings, such as his "English Grammar," Cobbett always digresses, from time to time, into gratuitous attacks on the multitudinous

objects of his indignation. "You may use," he tells his pupil, "either a singular or plural verb with a noun of multitude, but you must not use both numbers in the same sentence. It is wrong to say, Parliament is shamefully extravagant, and *they* are returned by a gang of rascally boroughmongers." In the "Rural Rides," which are perhaps the most peaceable and pleasant of his works, he interrupts a receipt for curing bacon, by an exhortation to the farmer's wife, not to let the Methodist preacher wheedle her out of a rasher when her husband is from home. In his writings, with all their faults, there is unflinching vigour, and a total absence of the maudlin sentimentality which disgraces, in the present day, the degenerate literature of agitation and discontent.

A RURAL RIDE.

I.

The morning fog on Fleet-street lay,
And hid the arches of Blackfriars:
But far up in the early sun
The cross that crowns the city shone
Above the crowded spires.

Where cool from sea across the bridge
The tide-borne river-breezes swept,
Southward a horseman took his way,
To meet the freshness of the day
While yet the millions slept.

From his broad weather-beaten face
A manly look of gladness spoke;
He snuffed from far the country air,
That blew from fields unvexed by care,
Unpoisoned by the smoke.

In the hot town, with bitter pen,
And wrathful warnings heard by few,
He had been battling many a week
With Boroughmonger, Bank, and Greek,
And Methodist, and Jew.

And though the unseasonable hour
Kept him unwilling from repose,
His nightly voice of discontent
Had sounded in the Parliament,
To vex his courtly foes.

A labourer's son, 'mid squires and lords
Strong on his own stout legs he stood,
Well-armed in bold and trenchant wit;
And well they learned that tempted it,
That his was English blood.

And every wound his victim felt
Had in his eyes a separate charm ;
Yet, better than successful strife
He loved the memory of his life,
In boyhood, on the farm.

Not for the song of nightingales,
Or murmur of poetic streams ;
But whistling boys, and lowing cows,
And earthy sound of cleaving ploughs,
He heard them in his dreams.

II.

The suburb's weary length of streets,
And lingering rows was left behind ;
On either side green hedge-rows lay,
And waving meadows deep with hay,
That bent before the wind.

From right to left the mower swept,
Stooping beneath the elm-tree boughs ;
The thin sharp blade cut cleanly through :
The full swath wet with morning dew
Fell down in heavy rows.

With understanding critic eye
The rider watched each motion lithe ;
The length of stroke ; the steady swing ;
And stopped to hear the whet-stone ring
Against the upright scythe.

But if he saw them droop and flag,
He said : " They want their fathers' beer ;
" And much I dread, that tea and slops.
" Supplanting honest malt and hops,
" Have done the mischief here.

" Ere scheming placemen taxed his drink,
" No fear the labourer's arm should tire :
" All through the healthy summer morn
" His wife was weeding in the corn,
" Who now must tend the fire.

" Pitt swelled the debt with loans and wars,

" And gave us lying rags for gold,
" And cut the workman's wages short,
" That farmers might be fat on port,
" And cotton prints be sold."

His horse was feeding in the hedge—
He jerked him up with angry rein ;
But well-kept farms, and fences neat,
And new washed sheep with clamorous
bleat,
Soon smoothed his thoughts again.

A little inn was by the brook,
Where in the eddy deep and cool
The shepherd stood : his red-faced boys
Dragged up the sheep with needless noise,
And splashed them in the pool.

He lighted down and laughed, as he
Had laughed a hundred times before,
To see each simple face come out,
And with a philosophic doubt
Conjecture of the shore.

" Even such a lad as those," he said,
" Was I some forty years ago,
" With little skill of pen or book ;
" But I could handle spade and hook,
" And drive a team and mow.

" Will one of these, I wonder, lash
" The base Republicans with slaves,
" Who cheat and cozen day and night ;
" And then, like me returning, fight
" With English fools and knaves ?

" Well, they will die where they were
born—
" And mine had been a happier part,
" If I had never sought to rove,
" Or made a name, for still I love
" The country in my heart.

" What need for me of state affairs ?
" I'd rather talk of parish news
" With smock-frocked men of hardy
sense,
" Who never sought intelligence
" From books and Scotch reviews.

" But no ! How many liars and rogues
" Would sleep in peace, if I were dumb ;
" Still let me live to grind and shake
" Their craven souls, and bid them quake
" For vengeance yet to come."

III.

The hostess at the open door
Met him with pensive look forlorn :
Down at his ease the traveller sat,
And asked her of her neighbour's state,
And price of meat and corn ;

And she with pious eyes upturned,
Poured forth the troubles of her mind :—
She might complain, but was content—
Although the agent raised the rent,
And took the tithes in kind.

"For highway work our horses go,
"Just when we want to stack the hay ;
"And then the poor-rates come—I'm
sure
"That we who find the rates are poor ;
"And yet they make us pay !

"What matter ? we and all we know
"Shall pass, like flowers cut down at
noon,
"Which wither ere the evening come !
"Ah ! why should any prize a home,
"That all must leave so soon ?

"But Heaven is kind, by woe and wrong
"To wean our thoughts from worldly
strife.
"No wealth or power avails the dead ;
"And fools are they who toil for bread,
"And lack the bread of life.

"The poor are rich beyond the grave ;
"The weary in repose are blest—"
"Ay," he replied in accents stern,
"And yet methinks 'twere well to *earn*,
"Before they *take* their rest.

"Is Earth full stocked by hand of man,
"That not a rood remains to sow ?
"Has tillage drained the last morass ?
"And up the dreariest mountain-pass
"Climbed, till it met the snow ?

"When the world's work is wholly done—
"Whatever head or hand can find ;
"Its wood all hewn, its water drawn ;
"Then let a great millennial yawn
"In sleep absorb mankind.

"Meanwhile the lazy Methodists
"Poison the cottage and the farm.
"That barn with stucco plastered o'er,
"And *Ebenezer* on the door—
"I knew it boded harm.

"A sluggard's life—a coward's death !
"Go, read those ancient books divine !
"God blesses there in worthier ways,
"With flocks and herds and length of
days,
"And oil and corn and wine.

"In daily toil, in deadly fight,
"God's chosen found their time to pray ;
"And still He loves the brave and strong,
"Who scorn to starve, and strive with
wrong,
"To mend it, if they may.

"If poverty is crouching want,
"Windows unglazed, a rain-soaked floor,
"Children that laugh not, cheerless wives,
"I loathe and hate the man who lives
"Contented to be poor."

IV.

Thick planted trees and hedges rank
From the small village closes threw
A steady shade across the road :
The old church tower with outline broad
Stood framed in deepest blue.

The way wound up beyond the bridge,
With easy curve ascending still ;
The scattered clumps grew far between,
And corn-fields with their brighter green
Spread larger toward the hill.

A summer stillness held the land ;
The windmill drooped its idle sail ;
Trembling with heat, the crystal air
Quivered and glistened, as it were
A silver-woven veil.

Only upon the topmost ridge,
Where barley spikes had burst the sheath,
A whitening roughness swept the ground ;
Long waves that broke without a sound,
While all was still beneath.

The light oats trembled on the slope,
The rich wheat clothed the loamy plain ;
Red poppies blushed, and charlock bright
With sunny streaks of yellow light
Gleamed through the taller grain.

The rider passed between the crops
Through swelling uplands many a mile—
In thought resolving all he saw
To sacks of corn and loads of straw :
And with a cheerful smile

He faced the sun—"Tis hot," he said ;
"But Heaven forbid that rain should
come !

"Six weeks of summer like to-day—
"And though corn-dealing Quakers pray,
"We'll bring the harvest home.

"They say the land is over-full—
"With wealth like this to crown the
soil !

"The bloated city sucks it in ;
"And they who neither plough nor spin
"Take all the fruits of toil.

"Too many men ! then let the worst,
"Let parasites and placemen go,
"Where close-stemmed forests shut the
skies
"From pining light-accustomed eyes,
"Amid Canadian snow.

"Let pensioned lords on Southern plains
"Roam where the Caffre's cattle graze ;
"Or dig amid the fever damps,
"That steam from low mosquito swamps,
"To meet the Tropic blaze.

"Why should the idle eat ? 'Tis well
"That English tempers suffer long,
"And yet it makes a plain man wroth,
"When evil laws, that pamper sloth,
"Insult the poor they wrong.

"But stay—the road slopes down ; the
vale
"Opens beneath on either hand,
"On to the far horizon blue ;
"And I must pause awhile to view
"The garden of the land."

The bosom of the curving hill
Was rich with growth of sheltered wood ;
Tall ash, and beech with polished bark
And soft film-covered leaves, were dark
Around him as he stood.

Old yew trees fringed the sudden height,
And blackened on the sloping downs ;
The plain beneath lay green and fair,
And white haze floated here and there
O'er quiet country towns.

Northward, to meet the widening Thames,
The chalky barrier Medway broke :
Far off, with narrowing hills between,
The meeting river lines were seen,
Traced out by steam-boat smoke.

The woods, the fields, the homes of men,
The dazzling waters where they shone—
He gazed on all with grave delight :—
"If none made wrong what God makes
right,
"What land were like our own ?"

Dwelling on each familiar spot,
He lingered down the long hill-side.
That pleasant country well he knew ;
For he had roamed it through and
through
In many a lonely ride—

By bridle paths from town to town,
Green lanes where gypsies camp at will,
And byways deep in sand, that led,
With hazels meeting overhead,
To hamlet, farm, or mill.

Oft had he talked with cottage wives
Of children playing round the door ;
And stirred to thought the sluggish blood
Of threshers resting round their food
At noon upon the floor.

Each market hall had heard by turns
His loud debate with booted squire,
Denouncing all with angry gibe—
The tithes, the game, the tax-fed tribe,
That robbed the poor man's hire.

While system-hating farmers left
Bargains half-made, and pressed to hear ;
And labourers stood with open eyes,
In wonder that a man so wise
Could make his words so clear.

V.

So through the silent afternoon,
Slow loitering to his journey's end,
Each homestead in its sheltered nook
He scanned with recognising look,
As one who meets a friend.

He saw the apple-boughs that brushed
The martin's nest beneath the eaves ;
The new-set fruit of plum and pear ;
The sun-lit cherry gleaming fair
Through points of drooping leaves.

The fresh green hop with vigorous shoot,
And healthy tendril climbed amain :
Its bristling ranges seen afar
Stood like battalions ranged for war
In squares along the plain.

Their full-grown beauty yet shall pass
The sunny terraces of vine
Through which the German river rolls ;
When autumn wreathes the nodding
poles
With heavy clustering bine.

Now lawns and gardens frequent
spread ;

Far bells came faintly from the town ;
Before him rose the well-known mark,
Where from the fir-toll in the park
The wall of elms ran down,

Relieving with their depth of shade
The light grey walls of tinted stone.
Gay creepers decked with lavish growth
The goodly front that toward the South
Bowed out to catch the sun.

Dim openings in the laurel screen,
Winding through light acacia bowers,
Led to the pleasant walks behind ;
To smooth plots safe from every wind,
And rich with tended flowers.

Far-down the slope a grove of limes
With fragrant blooms enriched the
breeze :

And tones of gentle chiding, blent
With bursts of youthful merriment,
Rang from the dome of trees.

For wilful dogs of many a tribe,
Newfoundland large, and terrier small,
In earnest glee intent to rouse
The anger of the lazy cows,
Defied the laughing call.

Nor ceased they till the graver mind
Of the slow herd was moved to wrath.
With tramp of dull indignant scorn,
And twisted tail and vicious horn,
They crowded on the path.

A labourer's child was running by,
Big with his errands from the farm.
Fixed with their stare at once he
stopped :
Down by his side his basket dropped ;
Down sank each helpless arm.

But those fair sketchers in the shade
Started to hear his piteous cry ;
And one ran out and took his hand,
And checked the herd with cool command
Of steady voice and eye.

She placed him safe beyond the gate ;
And proudly dried he every tear,
When the kind lady talked and smiled,
And told him that an English child
Must never cry for fear.

Just then she met the stranger's look
Close to the palings leaning o'er.
He raised his hat and bowed his praise :
There was no man who all his days
Had honoured woman more.

His vigorous pen had often told
The wisdom of a loving wife ;
The gentle courage suffering long,
The self-forgetting spirit, strong
To bear the load of life.

With courteous mien he turned away ;
And on he rode in cheerful mood.
" A trifle—yet I like," he said,
" Those bright looks, and that ready
aid—
" It did my spirit good.

" So is it. Books and dancing schools
" May do their worst—I never knew
" In labourer's hut, or hall of Earl,
" But that a genuine country girl
" Was kind, and brave, and true.

" So pleasantly my journey ends.
" Here come the straggling suburbs grown
" To hide the prettiest town I know :
" I wish the next good wind would blow
" That huge gas-chimney down.

" 'Tis sad to see green river fields
" Changing to rows of bricks so fast—
" But how is this ? the town seems
stirred !
" What ? have the foolish farmers heard
" My voice, and moved at last ?"

The County Hall was buzzing loud,
And talkers thronged the jostling street :
Red letters flaring half a yard
From many a white and blue placard,
Called all the world to meet,

And shake the seats of men in power ;
And like their happier sires complain
Of taxes all too tamely borne,
And prices low, and Polish corn,
And threatened fruit from Spain.

At once they knew his portly form ;
 And shouts of welcome told his name.
 "He comes—the public plunderer's
 foe!
 "How true he told us long ago
 "All placemen were the same !"

Around his horse, with waving hats
 And shakes from many a sturdy hand,
 On rolled the noise and gathering din
 Beneath the windows of the inn
 Where stood the men of land.

The baronet with look composed
 And gentlemanly sneer began :
 "See whom the thinking people's
 choice
 "Delights to honour with its voice !
 "They love a charlatan."

His colleague answered : "Little care
 "Have I for clamourings of the crowd,
 "Who judge off-hand of men and
 laws ;
 "Yet would I that their quick applause
 "Were never worse bestowed.

"They see in him the strength they
 share,
 "Which, nurtured in no other clime,
 "And mixed with evil and with good,
 "Has made our sullen island blood
 "Lead on the march of Time.

"I know him well—on every side
 "Walled round with wilful prejudice ;
 "A self-taught peasant, rough of
 speech,
 "Self-taught, and confident to teach,
 "In blame not over-nice.

"What matter, if an honest thought
 "Sometimes a homely phrase require ?
 "Let those who fear the bracing air
 "Look for a milder sky elsewhere :
 "Or stay beside the fire.

"There are worse things in this bad
 world
 "Than bitter jests and bearing free.
 "I hail thee, genuine English born ;
 "Not yet the lineage is outworn
 "That owns a man like thee."

CHEAP ART.

BY FREDERIC G. STEPHENS.

BEFORE quoting examples of Cheap Art existing amongst us, and insisting upon its importance, it will be well to consider what art itself should be. It must have its fountain in nature, and be loyal to her alone, not only in thought but in execution ; for the faithless execution ever betrays the unfaithful design, and shows the artist not to be penetrated with that humbly dutiful and conscientious feeling which alone indicates the true painter.

Art is grave and thoughtful work for grave and thoughtful men ; and to be worthy of this it must have meaning and object, or, what is the same, in the modern phrase critics have borrowed from the French,—motive. Everything that is merely put for itself in a picture, merely to fill in, or as a petty and irrelative accessory, is meaningless, purposeless, and not art. If this is the

case in mere detail, how much more so is it when a whole picture has no meaning and no purpose ? To be good art, then, a picture must have a motive ; no sick, puling one that weakens a feeble fancy, but a wholesome salted thought, or the suggestion of a thought. Therefore a picture, to take an instance, which shall represent two doll-like young females seated in an unfurnished apartment, the hall of a mansion we may say, where one of them fondles the other in the most foolish manner, is not art all, although a man of reputation does it. The thing is sickly, emasculated, and foolish. To make the subject vital to us, it should have soul and passion. The girls should not have posed themselves so elegantly. The one might have been weeping and the other at her knees ; but neither sympathy nor consolation is given or received in any such manner in this

working-day world of ours. Instead of the silly simpers or vacant expressionless eyes, we would have red lids and quivering lips; instead of the unrumpled lace and well-smoothed hair, bruised garments and dishevelled locks. To a grief which finds no more ardent expression, healthy hearts have no sympathy to give. The dolls will get over their doll-like sorrows, and we pass them with a sneer.

This is one kind of bad art, but there is another which is still worse, because it refers to something graver than the sick sentiment we have just condemned. A man shall take a household grief, the death of some one deeply loved—say a daughter dying of consumption—and make out of this holy sorrow popular and vulgar capital; take the human heart to the shambles and sell it, you may so say. Let us conceive the picture. This is my daughter dying of slow disease. She lies before me, idle and vacant, not seeking my eyes with hers that soon shall glisten with tears no more, not affirming her love or her hope of hereafter by mutely eloquent looks. Far from it: she has posed herself with a due regard to the falling folds of her dress, has not forgotten the fair contrast that little neck ribbon of purple tint has to her pale face; smoothed her hair to the neatest, yea, not forgotten to show the glittering tip of her boot. As if I, her father, cared for ribbon, or robe, or hair, that the death-damps shall sleek soon enough. This is my fading child, but what am I? If I could experience surprise in such a case, it would be to find myself a stolid, bald-headed, aquiline-nosed old gentleman, seated steadfastly in a chair, wearing my best black coat, and the cleanest of collars. My boots are undeniably Day and Martin's, and I am "reading the Scriptures" out of a bran-new family Bible. Yes, but reading them in such a way, that (merciful patience!) you would think I had a daughter died every day, and that I expounded some foolish historical fact, instead of pouring forth the words of life, and death, and Christ, and hope everlasting. I

am in deepest black, not only because my painter thinks that the most respectable wear, but because I have just lost my wife, whose grave (poor dear!) lies full in view in the churchyard, which gives incident to the prospect from my window. And in order that I should not forget what churchyards are for, there goes a walking funeral in at the gates. I'm a highly respectable man myself, and there's no fear of either wife or daughter being buried with less than three mourning coaches; that is a comfort. Behind my dying daughter stands a hired nurse and my other darling,—if that be she, indeed, who looks as if she conceived herself already heiress of her sister's clothing, and schemed to make them suit her own figure. Such horrid thoughts come upon one before a heartless sham picture!

Now I remember a picture of this subject that did my heart more justice.

My daughter was dying indeed—it was her last day, and I forget even what was the colour of her dress, all her face looked so holy and happy. Did I sit respectably at a distance in my best black coat? No, I think not; indeed, I had been up all night, and perhaps my eyes were a little weak with tears; I can hardly tell. The thin, thin face of my dear was all I saw, pale and yellow-sick, like old ivory, for the hot red spot had gone from her cheek; so that when I passed my hand over the great hollows that had been erst so fair and full, her skin was moist and chill. Her eyes were clear and not burning bright, and so like her mother's that the sight of my own lean, large-veined hand which trembled on her face startled me with the remembrance of how long ago she had been dead. Here was my other darling dying too. I knelt beside her, and her hand was on my neck (truly, I forget the collar). I *had* been reading the Bible, and the book lay under my elbow by her pillow; but we were now talking in the last hour, and she told me that which I can never tell,—no, not even think of without tears. There was no hired nurse in the room,

stirring gruel and jarring me with her alien tread; no cold-eyed sister, but instead a girl whose noiseless sobs shook the couch. There was no churchyard out of the window; indeed the curtains were drawn nigh together, most of the light coming softly on the face of my child. I dare say you might have seen that I was bald, and stooped with age a little; but if you had seen *her* face this would not have taken your eye.

We shall select an instance in another art, where the mis-reading of nature has been even more palpable.

There was erected, two or three years ago, a statue to Sir Charles Napier, the "Hero of Scinde," in Trafalgar Square:—probably there never was an occasion so peculiarly demanding the exercise of the highest faculty of art as this. The mere figure of a great man—to convey to the spectators an apt idea of the subject—should be a true representation of himself. We have long ago repudiated the preposterous fashion of dressing our statues in the Roman costume; and, with equal force, the silly idea of nude statues has been exploded. It was a great step when this point was achieved, and the sculptors compelled to show the man in the costume of his age. But to do this so that a work of art should impress the beholder, it is imperative that some characteristic, or eminently expressive action and attitude, should be given to the statue; otherwise the whole thing is stultified by its own tameness; and the result is, that no more idea of the subject is conveyed than would be given by taking an ordinary man from the pavement and putting him on a pedestal.

The novelty and attractiveness of a strange costume, or no costume, being lost, the design must rest entirely on its own merits, *per se*, for effect. This statue of Napier shows a shortish man, wrapped in a large cloak, and holding a sabre against his breast. He is looking nowhere and doing nothing;—in short, a mere figure of bronze upon a pedestal. Nothing could be more fatal to the purpose of the statue. Of all men and generals we have never had one less

conventional in look than the greatest of the Napiers. Every reader who has seen him will remember how markedly characteristic his appearance was:—lean to emaciation; a little stooping, not so much from weakness or age as from the wear of the eager fire with which the whole soul of the man was permeated. He looked swift to think and to do; keen as a sword, and penetrating as light. The sunken cheeks and glittering eye gained effect from those overhanging penthouse-brows and the clear-cut decisive mouth. An old comrade of the general's described him to us in a manner that may give the apt idea of the man, and show what might have been made out of his looks for purposes of art. We give it in his own words:—

"Ah, you should have seen him before a fight! He was more like an old eagle than anything else! He'd draw himself forward and thrust out his head and look out, just as a great bird does; putting his feet to the ground firmly, ruffling his plumage, and ready to strike with wing or beak. His eyes glittered with a steadfast light, and looked keenly round, ready to attack at right or left."

Now we contend that our friend's image of the aged eagle was far fitter, and more impressive, than this conventional old gentleman in the cloak, holding the sword so tamely. If we must have statues of old gentlemanly generals, this would be the right way to show them; but Napier was the very antithesis of an old gentlemanly general, and therefore we had better have had the "old eagle," with the ruffled wings.

Having thus enlarged upon the essentials of good art, and given examples of weak or bad results, we may proceed to point out some instances of fine and noble art, with a special reference to our object of indicating the existence of works where these qualities are to be found in combination with extreme cheapness. We will begin at a point approachable by all; the more willingly as the example is patent to all, and will illustrate our intention to demonstrate that the essentials of good art may be produced at a very minute cost.

For many years an artist—who, whatever the faults of his work may be, cannot be charged with tameness or conventionality of design—has been employed to illustrate tales in very cheap periodicals; and has done this in a way which not unfrequently wins the praise of the best judges, and never fails to attract the readers of the enormously circulating journals in question. We allude to John Gilbert, and his designs for the long-winded tales published in penny periodicals. We need hardly call attention to the spirit and vigour of Mr. Gilbert's designs, or point them out as an instance of the power of life-like art to attract an immense audience, to remunerate the publishers, and extend the artist's fame.

The French have an artist of similar, or, indeed, superior excellence in Gustave Doré, whose woodcut designs to Rabelais, Balzac, &c. are marvels for artistic faculty,—not so much for executive merit as for imagination and splendour of conception. The books we refer to are produced in France at a price which, considering their excellence, is trifling (in sterling cost much less than any such in this country). Some of his designs which appeared at the time of the siege of Sebastopol are well known in England, having been reproduced here, and obtained the admiration they merited. There was a book illustrated by him, also reproduced here, which will bear comparison with the finest works of art extant for spirit and high imagination. This was a folio, of a moderate price, called "*Jaufray the Knight and the Fair Brunisende*,"—an ancient legendary theme, with the subject of which we have nothing to do; but it will be well to select one of the designs for example of the artist's merits. Two knights are fighting a deadly fight in a deep glen by moonlight; the sloping sides of the hills approach each other to a ravine at bottom; the crests of the mountains are guarded by solemn rows of pines and deep foliaged trees,—their still gloom gives a profound horror to the landscape: one side of the valley lies in shade, while, on the other, the

steadfast cold moon-glare sleeps awfully in supernatural brightness, and on the broken sword casts portentous shadows which, with the trees, look breathlessly on the fight: half-way down, and struggling on the slippery grass, are the knights,—a-foot, armed *cap-à-pié*, at lance-thrust with each other, lunging forward all their mightiness, and while the long plumes of the helmets trail backwards with each effort, the dulled lustre of their armour, paled by the cold light, seems to flicker moodily and dim, hardly more bright than are their giant shadows that bicker and struggle on the sword as fiercely as they do. There is a terrible look of reality about the whole thing, catching the imagination so forcibly, that we conceive the deep, fierce breathing of the men,—could almost see the chilled steam of their respiration come through the helmet-bars, hear the grinding of lance on steel, the dull stamp of feet, or the breathless whirl of the huge swords that lie beside them—soon to be used with such effect that one or other man shall go rolling a helpless mass down the hill-side into the stream below, whose persistent babble has been broken by the clash of arms on armour; soon again to still by its murmurs those unwonted echoes that shake amongst the trees and offend the silent place. Now the excellence of this design consists in the artist's imaginative power of dealing with the elements of his subject—the intense contrast between the stillness of the moonlight and violence of the deadly fight. Both these qualities derive aid from an extreme fidelity to nature observed throughout, and to the artist's knowledge of the importance of duplication in design; for the shadows of the fighters seem to fight also upon the earth. He deserves for this the same admiration which is given to Leonardo da Vinci for making the horses, as well as the men, fight each other in the famous "*Battle for the Standard*."

It was the full feeling of the importance of fidelity to nature that gave so much power to Turner in all his works, and which has made his victory over the

popular favourites amongst what are called the Old Masters, so palpable. Take, for instance, the perfect success which has followed his own bold challenge to Claude, given when he bequeathed two pictures to the National Gallery on condition that they should be placed side by side with that master's most esteemed works. This has been done; and there they now hang, to the glory and honour of the marvellous Englishman, our countryman, whom the future generations will class with Shakespeare and with Hogarth as priests of nature.

On the subject of pictures in the National Gallery, the head-quarters of art, we must not omit to express our conviction that Sir Charles Eastlake has done good service to the popular feeling for genuine art, in placing before the people so many and such excellent examples of the productions of the Early Italian schools, which, despite their technical imperfections, are really loyal and true to nature; and wherein we may discover, through the crabbed and unlearned vehicle, the greatest depths of feeling, the most urgent earnestness, and an utter love and veneration for a noble ideal, not of men nor of earth.

It is not for want of collections and galleries of fine art that it is so little appreciated in England, but for the simple need of a standard by which men may judge for themselves. Once this set up, we have no doubt that those noble gatherings which so many of our public collections exhibit will be considered at their true value. We shall then see the finest collection of sculpture in the world—as the Crystal Palace undoubtedly contains—no more neglected for the less valuable portions of that place. The fine collections of drawings in the British Museum will obtain their share of attention, together with those which are displayed at Brompton. The production of photographs from these works will undoubtedly popularize their merits.

It would be a thing worth the consideration of our English publishers, to discover how it happens that the French

so far transcend us in the production of fine wood-engravings after ancient pictures. This they undoubtedly do, as has been recently shown in the publication of a series of engravings, selected very much at random, however, from such works. These an enterprising publisher brought out at a price which was so absurdly small that we really wonder at its success and remunerative power. We refer to the series of pamphlets issued by Messrs. Cassell, each containing three or more admirable wood-cuts, at the cost of a penny. The result, we understand, has been such as the effort merited. Most of these engravings were by French draughtsmen, and were reproductions of blocks used in France. Now if this could be done in France, we really do not see why the same might not originate with ourselves. The secret cause of our backwardness in these matters appears to ourselves to lie in the fact, not that we want skilful draughtsmen on wood,—this being far from the case, but in the extreme ignorance and want of artistic training appertaining to our wood-cutters, upon whom the execution of the block depends. With few exceptions these persons are totally incompetent to do the work demanded of them. Instructed at first in a routine system of rendering the expression, so to speak, of an artist's drawing, they *will* only give it in their own way, rendering the individuality of the result not that of the draughtsman but of themselves. Every artist who has had to trust his work to the hands of English wood-cutters has been made to feel bitterly the want of education in this respect they suffer under, and can corroborate our statements. But for this state of the case we might have to choose our illustration of what has been done in the way of cheap reproduction of noble works of art from amongst the labours of our best English painters: such men's names as Holman Hunt, Millais, Maclise, and Leslie, might receive honour on every cottage wall, if they felt their talents would be fairly displayed by the reproductions of English wood engravers. As the matter

stands this is not to be expected, and we must therefore turn to Germany for examples of high motivated art—religious and moral art, that is.

Messrs. Williams and Norgate have published here Julius Schnorr's "Bible Pictures," a series, in three volumes, of large woodcuts, by that admirable artist, which seem to us precisely to supply the want of the mass of English people. The price of these separately is such that no cottager need deny himself their possession, while their artistic merits render them fully worthy of the highest appreciation of the best judges. These works are by no means unknown in England; but we consider ourselves doing a service to the cause of true public love of art by calling attention to them; and, as it will in some degree mark our idea of what is required to lay a good foundation for wide popular appreciation of genuine art, we shall devote a space to describing one or two of them.

The series commences after the Fall, with an illustration of the declaration, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken." Thence through "The Expulsion," "Murder of Abel," "Punishment of Cain," "The Deluge," "Departure from the Ark," "Building of Babel," unto the eighth design, "Abraham beholdeth the Promised Land," which is the one we shall dilate upon, because it more fully exemplifies our idea of what is required for the case, and is on the whole the best work of the series. Each riding on a mule, and proceeding along a ridged hill, looking over the plains of the promised land, advances towards us: Abram and Lot, his brother's son, and Sarai his wife. The angel of the Lord, typifying the Lord himself, flies above the head of the patriarch, and with wide-spread wings and pointed hands indicates the land of promise. Abram's action is truly fine as he rides, abandoning the guidance of the mule as his arms go wide from him, and with their prone palms and parted fingers depressed, express at once gratitude, hope, and joy.

His head, thrown back in amaze, sends forward the long grey beard from his chest, and his eyes, half abashed with the glory of the Lord, level themselves to look below where the wide prospect of blessings lies spread out. His mouth is compressed and firm, and the nostrils raised, with a fine look of eagerness and delight, in admirable keeping with the action of the hands, that seem as if they would soon join themselves in prayerful gratitude; over his shoulders a grand mass of drapery gives a sweeping dignity to the figure, and falls in a loose mass of folds upon the neck of the mule. It is seldom that we have seen a figure so well composed as this, for the action of the figure and the expression of the face are contemporaneous with each other, a rare merit indeed, so that we comprehend the absorbing nature of his emotions at a glance. On the one side rides his male companion, awed and astonished; shading the sun from his eyes with one hand, and (here is a good point that makes the fine design) not so lost in the spectacle as to abandon the reins of his mule. He is less affected therefore, and, as is right, does not see so far into the future as the patriarch's prophetic vision goes, to whom it has been said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." On the right side of Abram rides Sarai, her hand upon the shoulder of her husband, calling his attention to the splendour of the sight they share. There is a fine discrimination of character between the two last, for she seems as if she could not enter fully on the glory of the promise until he had viewed the same, and seeks its interpretation, so to speak, from him. Behind them follow the keepers of the flock, and the camel-drivers, each with their charge. But the finest point of all in this design remains to be told; we call it the finest point, because it is supererogatory, and not immediately suggested by the text—therefore marks the ability of the artist, and how fully he enters into the spirit of the subject; for that is what we require if we are to receive a fine interpretation thereof. Before the heads of

the mules, who advance slowly, goes a little band of young children chanting with joy, and, hand in hand, pacing their first steps upon the land which is to be the heritage of themselves, their children, and their children's children. Now this is a highly poetical and most apt idea, and gives beautifully the feeling required by the subject—the gift of a land of inheritance. They wreath their arms upon each other's shoulders, and advance hand to hand as one. Far off the land spreads out in rock, forest, mountain, and river. The palms near by suggest fertility, and the whole design is expressive of wonder, gratitude, and delight.

For supplying the want of England in the direction of art-illustration of the Scriptures, we do not know any better example than these works by Schnorr. We should, however, rejoice if some artist, our countryman, were chosen to produce a similar series more suited to our own requirements. That is to say, the works should contain those illustrations of Eastern customs upon a knowledge of which so much of the pictorial interest, and, indeed, the mere comprehension of most of the subjects depends. Half the spirit and beauty of many Biblical illustrations is lost upon our people, because they are ignorant of Eastern customs. Many an allusion, resplendent with poetry and pathos, appears dull to us without this knowledge. Now those works of Schnorr, with all their excellences, fail to supply this want, and lose much nobly picturesque element thereby. Whether it arise from the peculiar turn of the German mind, that delights in the conventional in art, or from a feeling that it was unwise to disturb popular ideas on the subject of Scripture, even on such matters as costume and the like, an adherence to traditional art-errors is palpable throughout the series, and is a defect we cannot but lament. Now, it would be a grand thing for a grand artist to do, to go to the East, and there, where the manners and customs of the people have slept unchanged for so many ages, study those most interesting and, indeed, for

comprehension of the Scriptures, vital points. Let such an artist produce a series of Biblical illustrations, the result of such a journey, and of the conscientious study a fit man would be sure to give; let them be properly rendered in wood engraving, and, if art has any purpose beyond that of a toy, this will be the way to develop it. But most will depend on the choice of a fit artist. That we have such it is needless to assert. Surely, if it is worth while to excavate the ruins of a seventh-rate city in Asia, like Xanthus, to dig at Budrûm for the remains of Halicarnassus, or at Nimrûd for Nineveh, it will be worth while to illustrate the Scriptures with the results of the knowledge and the unexpected and marvellous light gained by these researches; the practical use of which seems to us to lie chiefly in this very employment of them for the ends of art. Raise up the buried city of Babylon before our people, resuscitate the glories of Jerusalem upon the paper before the multitude; let us have patriarch and prophet, hero and king, in the habit in which they lived, and then we may hope to have the benefit of these researches no longer confined to the knowledge of learned men, but lending an interest and a value to many an ill-understood passage, giving life, and substance, and persuasiveness to all, from the realism they would possess. This would be a triumph of art, and might be cheap art; for if a costly book upon Nineveh could reward publishers and travellers, how much more would such grand Bible pictures do.

In speaking of works adapted to the ends of art, and such as from their small price are accessible to all, it would be unpardonable for us to omit mention of two most admirable designs by Alfred Rethel—"Death the Friend," and "Death the Enemy"—works which combine the noblest merits of high art with the utmost simplicity, most moving pathos, and grave purpose. These are, indeed, examples of noble art nobly applied, and we are persuaded that it is only needful to spread a knowledge of them that they may be appreciated as they deserve. They are large wood-cuts, executed in a

broad, bold, and effective style of semi-outline, toned with masses of shadow, finely, expressively, and suggestively drawn, and conceived with that variety of incidental matter that is ever needful to command popular interest.

The first shows the interior of the lofty watch-tower of a church, that rises over a thickly-peopled city and a wide champaign country, watered by a winding river, and bounded far off by cliffs and hills. The pinnacles of the church below stand before the window of the place of watching, and bear their cusps and crockets like crowns upon a spear. It is the loftiest house of all, and looks down upon the horizon now radiant with the glories of the sun-rising; the growing light fast fills the room, discovering to us the watcher himself seated at rest in his chair, his old veined hands upon his lap just as they parted with the last prayer of life. He is a watcher of whom it has been often asked, "Watchman, what of the night?" and through many a year true and holy response has been given to the challenge; he has rung out the warning bells of time, danger, and rejoicing through a lengthened life, until the grey beard grew white upon his chin, his joints grew knotted and weak, and the feet trembled as he mounted the lofty look-out-place above all where the bells themselves were hung, and where he blew the warder's mighty horn, here hanging by, that called the people together whenever the false sun-rising of conflagration rose above the city. But now he rests dead in the chair, his head sunk between his shoulders, the large lean hands parted with the last prayer, and the ever-wakeful eyes glazed with the filming glooms of death. He died at his post like a true watchman and good soldier, but he will ring no more the bells announcing the dawn that now breaks upon the land—a truer dawning has risen for him. Instead thereof, Death tolls the bell, and as the long rope runs through his bony hands, lends to time the grievous, mournful sound that is given forth above. No ghastly form of death is that which has taken the place of the watcher and stands before

us, ringing his requiem and doing his duty as Death the Friend; all his bony terrors are shrouded in the pilgrim's gown of the watcher; the cockleshell upon his breast, and the water-vessel girt to his side, tell his errand is peaceful, and his duty here benign. The hood of the gown drawn to shadow the skull-like head softens the grisly outlines, and makes half-gentle the terrible apparition. It is Death the Friend come to him who expected long, laboured long, and prayed long, and who now lapsed gently from the world, the clear-voiced bird's carol in his ear,—for one has settled singing upon the parapet without, and mingles his sweet notes with the solemn sounds Death the Friend calls from the bells above. The pilgrim's staff, broad shell-bound hat, and palm-branch lying in a chair, tell the warder's peaceful life; the broken bread, the cup, and the open Bible, tell of his late occupation, while the apparition of the Friend, the clear carol of the bird, the rising dawn, and the shadows fleeting away, give promise of the future to him who shall keep watch and ward no more.

"The first appearance of the cholera was at a masquerade in Paris, in 1831," is the motto which accompanies the companion design to the above—"Death the Enemy." The fierce high revel has been going on in the tawdry room; the musicians rang out their loudest notes from the orchestra; the lamps glittered upon the dresses of the maskers, and their fevered, haggard faces looked luridly fair in the light; the room was filled with hot breath, and hot scents of patchouli, musk, savour of dying flowers, and fiery wine; the dancers went round in giddy whirling rings, and the floor trembled beneath their feet. Obscene talk and ribald song prevailed; hoarse and throat-rattling laughter from miserable women mixed with the coarser, jarring voices of the men; and through the blank, black windows, you saw it was darkest night without. The orgy waxed rampant, hotter and hotter, with every sensual sin; but there was among the dancers one whom they know not—a

figure in Eastern garb of white full robes, marked with tongues of flame, who held in his hand a short staff, to which were attached the thongs of a scourge, loaded at the ends with star-shaped points. This was a scourge indeed, but unknown as such till then. Meanwhile, he moved among the revellers with a stilly mien, his hands hidden in the heavy folds of the great mantle, and his face mysteriously shrouded from the light by the head-dress massed about it. Bayadere, and Pantaloon, and Scaramouch moved around him as he followed the quick dance with a slower foot, for his time was not yet come. At length, a still stranger figure entered the hall. A tall masker this, wrapped also in a robe from head to foot, hooded over the face, and masked above the teeth. Those who looked saw, with a strange thrill, glittering teeth and a bony jaw beneath; and, as he moved, the foldings of the robe showed there was a form within strangely gaunt. Louder and louder the music went, and faster and fiercer the dance. Each seemed intoxicated with the sensual feast, and to their reeling senses all the room was in a burning haze of sin, until he, the first comer, with the scourge and flame-embroidered dress, moved to the highest place, where erst lascivious woman and drunken man had rested, and, sitting there, put slowly from off his face the heavy robe and the falling folds of the turban, drew forth the scourge, and, with one sinewy hand, held it upon his knee, laid the other with a mighty clutch upon its wrist, and sat there steadfast and fearfully still among all the uproar. His face (thus he sits in the picture) was swarthy and livid of hue, as if a thousand years of sun had tanned it, looking rigid and dry. And rigid and dry was the mouth also, with cracked lips drawn apart; and rigid, fixed, and glaring, and dry were the eyes that protruded with an awful glitter. Brown-ashy parchment were his cheeks, going into gaunt hollows, which the white and gold-banded head-dress made more ghastly. As the mantle fell apart, you saw the

hollow column of his gullet, and the bony staff beyond that held his head;—three fleshless ribs and a hollow chest appeared beneath, open, cavernous, and horrid.

Not amongst the servants of Alexander was there more dismay, when one seated himself upon the throne at Babylon, and to them entering said, God Serapis bade him sit there and prophesy death, than seized the maddened men and women of the revel when this stern Eastern figure sat amongst them. The music faded into quivering and broken notes, and where there had erst been a storm of sound, piling harmony upon harmony of quickest measures, only a jarring wail came now and then as the flute-player drew breath through the instrument fixed at his lips, and the sinking arm of the violist let the bow tremble over the strings, vainly vibrating low shrieks. A horrid feter filled the room, overpowered the essences, the wine, and flowers (that should have been dew-bathed in the cool night without); the dance was stopped, and none moved but one—the last comer. HE slipped the mask from off his face, threw back the hood, and went on to a quicker tune, making a mockery of the merriment with two bones for bow and viol in his hands. HE capered among them—Death the Enemy—the antic Death!

Thus, then, they are before us:—Cavern-chested Death, fiddling upon two bones; the musicians flying fast, in haste stumbling on each other, some without their instruments, and some holding their breath because of the horrid stench; Death dancing, and his robes awaying to and fro to his own measure; the maskers prostrate, dead upon the floor, rigid from neck to heel, with clenched hand and foot; the bare-bosomed woman, half unmasked, shows her jaw dropped horridly; Scaramouch and Clown writhe upon the floor, the grinning mask of one most fearful mocking of his face; the bells upon the Fool's cap jingle as he twists. In the high place the grim Eastern figure sits, scourge-armed, silent, and still. This is the work of Alfred Rethel.

THE CRISIS OF ITALIAN FREEDOM.

BY FRANKLIN LUSHINGTON.

"FRANCE"—said lately the official mouth-piece of the Emperor—"is the only power in Europe which makes war for an idea." The particular application of this mystic sentence might be difficult, if in any sense the assertion were generally true. As, however, it is not true in general, and as every day shows more clearly that in the special case of the Italian war it is no more true than usual, in the sense in which it is intended to be understood by Europe, it is perhaps unnecessary to trouble ourselves with interpreting into ordinary language the proposition stated by the *Moniteur*. But it may be germane to the matter, to show by a trivial illustration which irresistibly suggests itself, in what sense (certainly not the one meant for European appreciation) the phrase in question may be justly said to contain a truth and a meaning. It has been somewhere asked, when a set of English gentlemen, clothed in red coats, top boots, and buckskin breeches, or some other carefully selected variety of appropriate costume, mounted upon the noblest living engines of locomotion that high breeding and high feeding can produce, are following the cry of twenty couples of hounds over brook and fence, after a little brown animal with a bushy tail, of no material value whatever, what is the object that so much expense, so much trouble, so much energy, not to say so much risk, is devoted to pursuing? And it has been answered, that, in contrast to all drivers of deer or boars into a fatal circle, all winders of the technical note of *la mort* upon the baronial *cor de chasse*, all slaughterers of game on a large scale whatever, the English foxhunter pursues—an idea. Not the useless little brown animal for his own sake, though his tail be valued as the decoration of an order of merit;—not the peace of neighbouring hen-roosts, the owners of which might in that case be bound to bless the

simple and inexpensive charity of a scheme for the gratuitous destruction of vermin, which farmers' traps and guns could not compass with certainty;—not the gratification of the limited senses of horse and hound, mere links in the chain of thought put into action, mere means adapted to an end;—not even the maintenance and glorification of the race of tailors, huntsmen and horsedealers, but an idea, a purely subjective affection of the mind of each individual who follows the fox.

In some similar sense it may really be said, that the policy of France in the Italian war has been the pursuit of an idea. The trophies of Magenta and Solferino have been bravely won, and will be proudly worn; the hounds have been well exercised, handsomely blooded, duly drawn off, and the experienced huntsman has quietly trotted them home. If the hounds thought at any moment that they were out for the useful purpose of exterminating the breed of foxes, or if the simple spectator assumed such to be the idea of the sport, he and they alike have by this time been disabused. They were only out for the limited purpose of exterminating that particular fox; the idea remains the property of the foxhunting mind that guided them and set them on. An idea cannot bear too unconditional and comprehensible development, or it ceases to be worth pursuing and sympathising with; it must not be run down with the unreasoning ferocity of those who see a tangible object close before them. Whatever may become of the visible sign, the idea itself may be needed for turning out another day; it must be preserved, not destroyed, even at the expense of acquiring a reputation for flagrant inconsistency. It may even be necessary actually to breed and to import the manifestations of ideas, like foxes, for the purpose of maintaining the sport they afford; else upon the

The Crisis of Italian Freedom.

next day when the hounds meet (wherever that may be), where would be the "idea" for the sportsman to pursue?

France made war according to her usual custom, and in her usual style, "for an idea" on the shores of the Crimean peninsula: and England joined her in so doing. The great Nimrod of ideas on the French side of the Channel was ready enough to leave off their pursuit in that instance, as soon as the chase could be relinquished with a decent parade of political success, and military glory: and the inconvenient obligations of an alliance, drawn too close for the sake of a special object, carried the English Government with him. The Imperial Vicegerent of Providence in France, whether or no he chastens those whom he loves, certainly loves those whom he chastises. Every occasion which has presented itself since the termination of the Russian war, for enforcing in detail the execution, or else nullifying the intentions, of the Treaty of Paris, has shown the indifference of French policy towards the realising of the idea which it professed to yearn for so strongly, and in the nominal defence of which the French nation bled so bravely. The occupation of the Isle of Serpents; the union of the Danubian Principalities; every question which has arisen to test the durability of the arrangement for the maintenance of the Turkish Empire, has found France upon the side of Russia, and opposed to England. The mission of making war for the Turkish idea, which France had proposed to herself, was in her eyes definitively accomplished by the evacuation of Sebastopol upon the fortunate and brilliant capture of the Malakoff. And her warlike mission in behalf of the Italian idea is authoritatively stated to have been as absolutely satisfied by the sudden striking of a balance with her antagonist, which followed the happy counter-surprise of the field of Solferino. Her

— half-supt sword, which frankly
would have fed,

Pleased with this dainty bit, goes
home to bed.

It must be confessed that the national attitude assumed by ourselves before and during the late campaign in Lombardy was such as, though not to justify, at any rate to point with a plausible satire, the expression of the *Moniteur*, that France is the only power that does go to war for an idea. A praiseworthy but exaggerated alarm, lest any mere diplomatic blunder should drift us un-awares into the necessity of taking an active part on the one side or the other of a quarrel in which we could not, under its first aspect, unreservedly sympathise with either party, led our statesmen and public prints into the most needlessly clamorous and needlessly reiterated assertion of our intentions of absolute neutrality under all possible eventualities. By elevating the evanescent and occasional theory of the expediency of neutrality into a permanent and supreme doctrine, we not only succeeded in neutralising our own well-meant but simple efforts to keep the peace of the world, but incidentally rendered plausible the self-glorification of France in the phrase above quoted. Foolish gratification of vanity, as it may seem to assert an exceptional readiness to back up an opinion at the sword's point, there is, at least, an equally unwise and undignified abnegation of the power of national self-assertion involved in pledging ourselves to an obstinate unreadiness to intervene in earnest, and with our whole strength, in the solution of a European difficulty until we are forced by actual attack to take part in the fray. We have been so often burnt in that kind of fire that it is very natural we should be careful of meddling; but it is none the less the part of a mere child to dread and repudiate the use of combustibles altogether.

This phase, however, of the Italian question is now passed over. France has enjoyed her satisfaction of making war for an idea, as we have ours of steering clear of the war while it lasted. She has won, by the sharpness of her sword, the *élan* of her Zouaves, and the good fortune of her generals, glory enough in a six weeks' campaign to last till the

next time when a fresh supply of glory is required. She has accomplished her military mission so adequately as to be able to lay by her arms with a profession of supreme moderation towards her adversary, and of hyperbolic deference to the attitude of distrustful misconstruction and possible interference assumed by other European powers, at the exact moment when it best suited her own convenience, or rather her own necessities. Few historical instances could be found more singularly illustrative of personal character than is this year's episode of the Lombard war in regard of its principal manager and most prominent actor,—the single and self-contained personage, who, for the present, is France.

The main personal success which he has achieved in the campaign, and the conference that closed it, lies in the proof he has given the world that, as a strategical manœuvrer, he is at least upon a par with any of his own generals, and that, as a military diplomatist, he is undeniably superior to the immature and obstinate-tempered young Emperor of Austria. The knowledge where his adversary's shoe pinched, and the art of concealing the battered condition of his own equipment—the consequent power or affectation of opposing his own *forte* (to borrow a phrase from the fencing school) to his enemy's *foible*—the acuteness which, by localising the struggle on the field of battle most convenient to himself, imposed his own rules of the game upon his opponent, while allowing him at the same time to threaten with feints of vague and mysterious dangers in other quarters—such have been the simple but effective weapons of policy of which the French emperor has made so markedly successful a use in the present year. Looking at the late conflict merely as a trial of strength and science between the powers of France and Austria, it is impossible not to feel such respect for the talents of its designer, and the strong clear head and will which carried his programme through without betraying its poverty or flinching in its execution, as is compatible with a

thorough conviction of the selfish meanness of the design itself. There is nothing of what has transpired, either before or since the peace of Villafranca, which tends to prove that the imperial scheme was in the outset more comprehensively liberal, or more sincerely disinterested in scope, than the bases of that arrangement are *primâ facie* evidence of its being. It is unprofitable to speculate whether or no the plan of inducing the inhabitants of central Italy to accept the monarchy of a Bonapartist prince is even yet among the projects in reserve of the reticent Emperor, for the maintenance of French influence in the Peninsula. Had Jerome Napoleon succeeded, during his special campaign of enlistment and inquiry, in arousing among the Tuscan people a personal enthusiasm (or even any feeling but that of contemptuous indifference) for the cousin of their imperial liberator and the son-in-law of the chivalrous "Sword of Italy," it is at least probable that, in the Villafranca arrangements, the bitter hostility of Francis Joseph towards Victor Emmanuel might have been satisfied consistently with the leaving open a wider path of compromise than the stipulated restoration of the several ducal families. But that the French emperor had no original intention of destroying the boundaries, or displacing the dynasties, of the central Italian states except for this private object, is sufficiently indicated by the language used by his own ministers in the diplomatic contest which preceded the war: and the authoritative rumours prevalent at Paris, from the beginning of the actual campaign, as to the probable shortness of its duration, are strongly corroborative of the idea that he intended from the first not to go further, either in a military or diplomatic sense, than in fact he did. It was no doubt impossible for the profoundest calculation to foresee in actual detail the character which might have to be given to the war. Had the Austrian tacticians displayed the energy, skill, and stubbornness of resistance on their outer lines of defence which might reasonably have been ex-

pected, it must have been necessary to besiege or isolate their outlying fortresses of Pavia and Piacenza, or to execute a successful diversion on the side of Venice, before they could have been reduced to an acceptance of the same terms. But in any case, even if his military preponderance had been more substantially proved than it was, the general level of his policy would, we believe, have been the same. We should still have seen, under one shape or other, a scheme for balancing Austrian influence in Italy by French influence—not a plan traced out for rendering her independent of either. The cry of setting Italy free “from the Alps to the Adriatic,” was used, as most cries of the same character are used, as a catchword for exciting an enthusiasm which might be advantageous as a lever. We trust that it has ended (as some few cries of the same character do end) in rendering the satisfaction of that enthusiasm more probable, if not more necessary, than it was intended to be. Whether Louis Napoleon so far mistook the individual character of those heads of the Italian movement with whom he had more particularly to deal, the Piedmontese king and premier, as to believe that their ambition or their patriotism would be satisfied by the annexation of Lombardy, and the restoration (in all but the new nominal federative element) of the *status quo* through the rest of Italy—it is immaterial to inquire too closely. If he did not mistake them, he absolutely disregarded them: and the pointed personal reproof, administered in the instantaneous resignation of Cavour upon the publication of the terms of the treaty-surprise of Villafranca, was but as water running off the skin of proof which clothes imperial impassibility, whatever effect it may have produced in the eyes of Italy and Europe.

But whether he mistook Victor Emmanuel and Cavour or no, it is certain that he mistook the depth and firmness of the national feeling entertained by the Italians of Central Italy. It is certain that he must have expected a gradual settling down of any enthusiasm for

union, and an acquiescence in whatever interpretation of the new conditions of so-called Italian independence he himself might ultimately succeed in settling on as definitive, in harmonious concert with their joint framer, the Sovereign of Austria. Large as is Louis Napoleon's acquaintance with the weaknesses of masses of men, it is probable that the strength and resolute dignity of the national attitude assumed by the Italians, is a new phenomenon to him. It is one upon which, for his own sake, he may do well to meditate closely; but it is still more one which, if he really possesses the quality so often attributed to him of “comprehending his epoch,” he will do wisely to respect, and to profit by. If the Italy of 1860 is free (and her union is the only condition which will allow of her being really free), history will not be too curious to point out how far she has outrun the designs of the most prominent and powerful agent in her enfranchisement, in 1859. Even Italians, of all colours of politics, however justly they may then quote the high-spirited vaunt of Charles Albert,—“*L'Italia farà da se*,” as the one maxim the strict observance of which will have saved the consequences of their victory upon the present occasion,—will be obliged to admit that the active aid and countenance of the French were the indispensable preliminaries to their entering upon a struggle for national existence, upon equal terms.

The use to which a victory is put is what determines its immortality. In fifty, or twenty years, the name of Solferino will either be forgotten or disregarded as a *brutum fulmen*, shunned and hated as the memory of a snare and a pitfall, or cherished as the starting point of a North Italian kingdom. Which ever event takes place, with the memory of Solferino is bound up the reputation of the Italian policy of Louis Napoleon. Even were he insensible to the present scandal of a compulsory restoration of the old state of things in Central Italy, or to the ignominy of an admitted failure, we do not believe him to be insensible to the gain of satisfaction and security

involved in his appearing to head the national movement of Italy, at its end, as at its beginning. Beyond the mere giving up of the idea, that the conditions of Villafranca in regard of the re-arrangement of Central Italy are to have any valid meaning whatever, little is required (thanks, as we said before, to the Italians themselves) to gratify the French Caesar's ambition of being venerated in Italy as a most honourable man.

It is even yet maintained by fanatical partisanship, or perverse scepticism, that the desire for fusion is by no means universal in Tuscany and the Duchies; that a fair appeal to the feelings of the population has not yet been made, and that, if made, it would probably result in the recall of the deposed dynasties.

The most credulous faith in the loyalty inspired by paternal government hardly ventures to insinuate a similar assertion as to the secret wishes of the inhabitants of the Romagna. It is, indeed, impossible to foretell with accuracy what might be the result of a clever manipulation of the gambling implement of universal suffrage among the populations of Central Italy. Unthinking jealousy of the peasants against the cities might, perhaps, justify the expectation of the reactionary party in Tuscany. If the phrase of "respecting the desires of the population," should perchance be intended by its imperial utterer (the elect of ten millions) to bear this interpretation; and if the experiment suggested should result in a somehow obtained numerical majority of most sweet voices for the restoration of the Grand Dukes, the test would only convince us of its own fallaciousness. It is impossible to retrace the course of events from the commencement of the struggles, without being strongly impressed with the certainty that the real sense and judgment of the country have already, most plainly, solemnly, and definitively declared themselves. Had Austria been able or willing, before the war was imminent, to apply the test of universal suffrage in Lombardy, it is by no means impossible

that even there the experiment would have shown, if not an actual majority, at least a large minority, opposed to the change from Austrian to Sardinian rule. Yet we should not have believed, in that case, that, as far as regards the views of the real and free-thinking power, educated patriotism, and common sense, among the Lombards, such a result would prove anything whatever; nor should we attach any greater value to it, if an analogous phenomenon be brought about in Central Italy. The strong community of interest felt by the Tuscans in the national cause, of which they considered Sardinia as the champion, was early and irrefragably proved by the flocking of volunteers, at the rate of one thousand a day, from the port of Leghorn, to join the standard of Victor Emmanuel. Such a pronouncement of the national sentiment made it from the first obvious that, sooner or later, the dilemma must arise, which did, in fact, present itself before long, when the Grand Duke of Tuscany would be called upon by his people to declare himself as an active ally of Sardinia in the cause of Italian independence, while every tie of private feeling and gratitude, as well as his own personal tendencies and system as a governor, bound him to Austria. If the Tuscan people were not able to range themselves openly by the side of the Piedmontese while the Grand Duke's authority was in the way, they were ready and resolved to pronounce for the removal of the obstacle.

Out of no personal animosity for the individual whom they could not but distrust; out of no wish for any vindictive retaliation against the chief visible, and most responsible exponent of an intolerable system; but out of a simple and well-justified conviction, founded, it might be said, on the confession involved in the circumstances of the grand ducal flight, that the continuance of his dynasty was incompatible with any active assertion of the principle dearest to the hearts of the Tuscans, sprang the declaration of the *déchéance* of that dynasty, and the offer

of dictatorship in the first place, and sovereignty in the next, to Victor Emmanuel. We do not believe that there is the slightest pretext for asserting, that the constituency of the Tuscan National Assembly was intimidated or tampered with on the occasion of the late elections; or that their delegates outstripped the popular judgment in the interpretation and performance of the mandate intrusted to them. It should not be forgotten, that in Tuscany a genuine basis of municipal liberty and local self-government had been firmly established ever since the reign of the Great Duke, Leopold the First; and that even up to the year 1848 the old constitutional forms and habits of election were in full legal force, and in no wise destitute of a practical vitality. The intelligent and respectable inhabitants of the cities and country of Tuscany were already competently educated, by actual experience, in the bearings of the responsibility which the choice of their representatives was on this last occasion to throw on them. In the entire absence of Sardinian *employés*, who had been scrupulously withdrawn from their temporary posts before the elections began, the only influence which could possibly have been exerted upon individual volition, was that of the overbearing popular feeling. It is probable that the deposed Grand Duke has still partisans in Tuscany, who did not feel inclined to record an unprofitable and solitary vote in the face of the general expression of the opinions of the country; but that the moral pressure exerted by so large a majority was, in any single instance, unfairly or illiberally used, not a shadow of proof has come to light up to the present moment. The statement of what actually happened could not be given with greater force, or with more literal truth, than is done in the memorandum recently addressed by the Sardinian Government to its ministers at the courts of the great European powers:—

"In considering what has taken place at Florence, Modena, and Parma, we are struck by the accord and spontaneity

which marked all the deliberations of the constituted bodies, and the order which has constantly prevailed during the unforeseen crisis which had to be traversed. This order and regularity are easily explained, when we consider that it was not the advanced parties, nor men excited or soured by old grievances and unjust personal sufferings, who placed themselves at the head of the movement. All who are most illustrious among the nobility, most notable in commerce, most enlightened in influence, and most influential among the large landowners, co-operated in the accomplishment of an act which was destined to assure to those countries a state of things more in conformity with their welfare, and with the general interests of Italy. These resolutions were not the effect of unreflecting excitement; they were maturely weighed, and were adopted on considerations of a superior and permanent order."

The commendation for the most singular and laudable spirit of order shown under the most trying circumstances, is justly extended, in the above words, from Tuscany to the smaller duchies. Notwithstanding the single and most deplorable exception which has just occurred at Parma, in the murder of the wretched Count Anviti through the vindictive and sudden outburst of an infuriated multitude to whom his person had become unhappily familiar under the most hateful circumstances (the single exception, we trust, that will occur), the attitude of calm and dispassionate earnestness maintained throughout the crisis by the great mass of the populations of those States, has been a spectacle for surprise and admiration to the politicians of Europe, who have been accustomed to connect the ideas of unbridled licence, Red Republicanism, Carbonarism, societies of assassination and brigandage, with the very name of a popular movement in Italy. At the same time that it is impossible to withhold our strong sympathy from the personally undeserved misfortunes of the blameless, high-spirited and judicious Regent-Duchess of Parma, it is impos-

sible not to feel as strongly that the spontaneous and universal sentiment of respect and regret for her ought not to weigh against considerations of the highest national expediency. Cursed with the burden of an incompetent, profligate, and tyrannical fool in her ducal husband until the silent Nemesis of destiny trampled him out in a chance pot-house medley or preconceived brawl, she succeeded during his lifetime in keeping her name unstained by the reflection of his follies and excesses, and in gaining the love and reverence of the same discriminating subjects who abhorred his aimless tyranny. Placed by his sudden death in a difficult and critical position, she accepted that position with a creditable firmness and dignity, and maintained it—until the irresistible force of inevitable circumstances rendered it untenable—with an even-handed justice, a moderate and liberal policy, which would (if anything could have done so) have reconciled the contradictions of the situation of Parma in the present struggle. Deep as was and is the respect felt for her by the most uncompromising advocates of the fusion among those over whom she had ruled,—the twice-proved fact of the incompatibility of her further tenure of her sovereign office with the accomplishment of the national will, furnishes, on the very ground of that respect, a more conclusive argument that the position itself had become an irremediably false one. No such phrase as that which appropriately saluted the provinces of Modena on their liberation from the “giogo Estense,” disfigured the proclamation which followed the departure of Louisa Maria from Parma. The Dukedom of Parma fell because it was impossible for Parma to remain neutral in the general conflict, and because the idea of an Italian confederation (broached and argued through Central Italy as a possible compromise before the actual war began, as is shown by the *mémoire* of her minister, the Marquis Pallavicino, of the 12th May, 1859) was recognised as an unsatisfactory and insecure solution or half-solution of the problem. And if the Modenese had a

readier excuse for a more lightly-considered movement in the presence of local grievances, the deficiency of any personal reason for strong attachment to their sovereign, and his notorious leaning to the Austrian side, and reliance upon Austrian protection,—though their spontaneous and unanimous action cannot therefore be quoted as so strong a proof of the depth of feeling by which they were animated, yet the grave moderation and tranquil energy of their conduct and demeanour have been fully equal to that generally displayed in Parma and Tuscany.

But—say those who anxiously seek to find a plausible *mezzo termine* which will patch up matters without irretrievable offence to one side or the other—if you once admit the principle of fusion, and grant the wishes of Tuscany and the Duchies, what is to be done with the Legations? To turn adrift upon the world those more destitute dukes is something: but to rob a Holy Father!

“Bardolph hath stole a pix, and hanged must ‘a be;” and although in the case of the church property of the Legations the pyx is not only desirous, but determined to be stolen, the sacrilegious royal receiver runs the greatest risk of being, if not hanged, provided with as bad a name as the most omnipotent of excommunications can give him. But (logically speaking) where *can* you draw the line? If the Romagna has been, as it notoriously has been for many years, the worst governed province in Italy north of the kingdom of Naples, have its inhabitants less right or less call to protest, because they are the special children of the Holy See? If their conterminous neighbours to the west of the Apennines have succeeded in freeing themselves quietly from the gag which stifled the expression of their sentiments, so have the *Romagnuoli*. The actual change from patent discontent, oppression, and disorder, to a happy and patient striving after well-ordered prosperity and peaceful freedom, has been even a more extraordinary phenomenon in degree among them than

elsewhere. Is it possible (alas! all things are possible) that they are to be thrust back within the tender mercies, the unimproved and unimprovable incapacity for reform, which mark the domestic policy of the College of Cardinals?

It is true that the dilemma (not the logical, but the political one) is great. French diplomacy is only bound to Austria by the questionably strong pack-thread of Villafranca, in the matter of restoring the ducal dynasties. French interests, or rather the Imperial interests in France, are curiously interwoven with those of the Holy Church, in and outside of the Legations. It may be questioned how far the Liberator of Italy would be willing to risk "for an idea" that popularity among the French clergy which has hitherto been so useful to him. It is possible for him literally to fulfil his pledge to Central Italy, as far as the Romagna is concerned, by preventing all foreign interference, and yet to allow the Pope to reduce to order his rebellious subjects, since the Pope is not a foreigner, whatever his soldiers are. The scandal would be great, but the absolution it would gain would be perfect, and the indulgence would be deservedly plenary; for whatever force the Pope might command in Romagna would be only disposable in virtue of the French acting as the police of Rome.

The allocution addressed by the Emperor upon this topic to the Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux, for reproduction in the European journals, is as dark as it was undoubtedly intended to be. Whether it is meant to reconcile the Pope to the acceptance of the loss of the Romagna as an accomplished fact, as the condition precedent of a continuance of that armed support which France has given him, and which Europe has tolerated her giving with the most absolute equanimity, for the last ten years, or whether it is meant to reconcile the *Romagnuoli* to the restoration of the Papal rule, in consideration of such reforms in that rule as may be extorted by a serious threat of withdrawing that support altogether,—is probably known to the Emperor alone.

It is capable of either interpretation: and all of which we can be sure is, that it was not spoken without a meaning. The event alone will show unmistakably to which party is turned the sharp edge of the oracular warning, which gleams in the dusk as one that may cut either way.

Such, in brief, are the general aspects for the moment of the actual crisis of Italian regeneration: North and Central Italy unanimous in their wishes, and, we trust, in their resolution; Europe, puzzled, anxious, afraid of committing itself, even in looking on. Of Venetia and the kingdom of Naples it is at once useless and melancholy to speak now. The first has, by no fault of her own, lost through the terms of Villafranca the ray of hope that was beginning to brighten and broaden over her: the second has been equally, though perhaps more unreasonably, disappointed, in the early discovery that King Bomba's Jesuit-bred heir is not much more wise, more liberal, more courageous, or more sincere, than King Bomba. For the one reason or the other, both are equally foreign to the hopes and fears of the present phase of history, which embrace the rest of Italy. It would have been as absurd an outburst of sentimentality in the Central Italians to parade the unprofitable self-sacrifice of resigning their own wishes and position for the sake of wheedling Austria into a more liberal administration of Venetia, as it is monstrous in foreign pedants to pretend, that if North and Central Italy are united in one kingdom, they will be so unjustifiably strong as to form a permanent danger and a legitimate grievance to Naples. The future of both Naples and Venetia will have to take care of itself: and it will do so none the worse, but rather much the better, if the rest of Italy justifies, by the happiness and strength gained in a permanent union, the ardent desires and the calm judgment of all Italians who have free room given them to exercise judgment or to realise desire. We trust that the anticipations of those ill-pro-

phets who predict that a mutual hatred among the several great cities of a united Italian kingdom would inevitably produce an early and violent rupture, are doomed to a total disappointment. There may be occasional rivalries between Milan and Turin, as there have been between Turin and Genoa. But the larger the bundle of sticks is, and the closer they are bound together, the more will their individual angularities counteract each other. If England were now re-distributed into a heptarchy, what a perpetual angry simmering would soon become audible between the two

great neighbouring cities of South Lancashire! We must invert the old fable where the bundle was weakened by being untied, and the sticks broken one by one,—and carry the metaphor even further. The confederation of Italian states or cities is at best the bundle of sticks tied up with a cord that may be loosed, cut, or broken. Plant the sticks together while the life is strong in them; let them twine together at the roots and interlace in the branches, and you may yet see them grow into a single tree.

MORAL ASPECTS OF MR. TENNYSON'S "IDYLLS OF THE KING."

BY J. M. LUDLOW.

AMIDST all the din and strife of present politics, the Poet Laureate of England sends a volume of "Idylls" into the world. He has chosen for his subject one which seems most remote from all sympathies of the present. A king whose very existence is scarcely more than probable, and who has long since shaded off into a mere legendary hero, surrounded by personages still more shadowy than himself,—a sphere of manners, pursuits, aspirations, never more than half real, and which have long faded away from the very memories of the many,—these are what he comes to tell us of. Have we leisure to listen to him? Does he tell us anything worth the hearing? Has he been merely twanging his harp, with the world all ablaze around him?

Yet in sooth, ere this, most men capable of any thought at all must have learnt that, in dealing with Mr. Tennyson, they were dealing with a many-sided mind, each one of whose works, even if not seen to be framed with any definite purpose, bore a certain organic relation to the others,—tended to develop a new portion of the life's labour of a deep-thinking, deep-feeling man. The "Poems," so various in subject and treatment, served as boundary stakes for the poet's

future domain,—as marks and buoys to signal out some main channels of his future thought,—as nets of cunning fancies, and hooks baited with sweet words, to catch the minds and ears of his countrymen. The "Princess,"—unique as a literary production in its gradual development of interest, from the purely fictitious to the deeply real,—showed him at earnest and triumphant grapple with one of the great puzzles of our age, that of the relation of the sexes, and the province of woman's activity. "In Memoriam" exhibited, in the most perfect form which it has probably ever put on in poetry, the victorious struggle of a human spirit with sorrow and the shadow of death. "Maud"—seizing hold of a passing historic opportunity—showed how morbid despair and self-torture are to be shaken off by devotion to a noble cause. Having been taught so much, we are entitled to expect that the "Idylls of the King" will have something also to teach us; we shall probably do wisely if we let them teach us after their own fashion, in their own time.

Love, its diseases and its counterfeits, such may be said to be the theme of the new volume. In "Enid," the tender, faithful, love of a wife, overcoming all suspicion by constancy of self-devotion.

In "Vivien," the false or harlot love, selling its caresses for selfish ends. In "Elaine," the wild, overpowering might of youthful love, self-absorbing rather than self-sacrificing, seeming-strong for death, because too weak for life far from its object. In "Guinevere," the final fate of adulterous love, when the eye opens at last to its guilt, and the mouth tastes the ashes of its apple of false delight.

Clearly marked as are these four subjects,—self-contained as are the pictures which they present,—yet "Guinevere" is, in fact, *the* "Idyll of the King." If you be wayward, you may read the others almost at haphazard, so that you always reserve this for the last. To this, in truth, all the others with subtle art are leading you up. Always in the background of each successive picture, yet growing at every touch more distinct and prominent, is the guilty love of the Queen for Lancelot. If Geraint bears Enid away from the Court, it is because

"A rumour rose about the Queen,
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot."

In "Vivien" we begin by hearing of Arthur,

"Vext at a rumour rife about the Queen."

In "Elaine," though the "lily-maid of Astolat" be the central figure, yet her whole fate hangs on that other love, whereby Lancelot's "honour rooted in dishonour stood." We see it already before us, with all its fatal train of anguish and evil; Lancelot, "vext at having lied in vain," his face marred and marked ere his time by that inward consciousness of sin through which

"His mood was often like a fiend, and
rose
And drove him into wastes and soli-
tudes
For agony——"

his "holy vows" and "pure resolves" of sickness, soon broken; his rejection of the spotless girlish love which

"Might have made this, and another
world

Another world for the sick man ;"

the sorrow of Elaine's death, the Queen's

causeless jealousy, the sting of Arthur's friendship, and of his generous hintings of all that he *will* not believe,

"For now the people say wild things of thee,"—

and finally, Lancelot's own sense of the unbearable weight of his guilty bonds, which makes him pray that, if he should not dare to break them, God should

"Send a sudden angel down,
To seize me by the hair and bear me
far,
And fling me deep in that forgotten
merc." . . .

So that we feel it to be no transition from subject to subject, but merely the full development of that which has been standing out more and more as *the* subject of the work, when the fourth Idyll opens before us.

But the view of the subject which "Guinevere" presents, is one wholly different from any that has yet been offered to us in the volume. Hitherto, Lancelot has claimed the greater share by far of whatever sympathy the guilty pair might command. We heard in "Enid" of Guinevere's beauty and stateliness, and queenly friendliness for Enid, and forgiving courtesy towards Edyrn. Merlin, in "Vivien," excused, indeed, the origin of her love :—

"Sir Lancelot went ambassador at first,
To fetch her, and she took him for the
King,
So put her fancy on him."

But "Elaine" brought out the more painful sides of her character—the self-deceptions by which she seeks to palliate her own guilt by throwing it on Arthur,—

"The faultless king,
That passionate perfection, my good
lord,
He cares not for me ;
Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
And swearing men to vows impos-
sible" . . .

—her sharp reproaches to Lancelot when she deems the maid of Astolat to

have won his love, and that jealousy which wrings out from her, for very spite to Lancelot, the too-late confession :—

"I for you

This many a year have done despite
and wrong

To one *whom ever, in my heart of hearts,*
I did acknowledge nobler."

It is this character, of which we have seen hitherto but the purely brilliant or the harsher aspects, on which Mr. Tennyson now concentrates our attention ; and, though the last Idyll be the shortest of the four, none can help feeling how much the fullest it is of meaning and of purpose.

The self-reproach which has awakened up earlier in Lancelot's heart, has scathed her also ; for,—

"The powers that tend the soul,
To help it from the death that cannot
die,

And save it even in extremes, began
To vex and plague her. . .

And all this trouble did not pass but
grew."

She has herself prayed Lancelot to break their bands of guilt ; but amidst the very "madness of farewells" they have been surprised. She has fled to sanctuary at Almesbury ; she lives there unknown among the nuns, tended by a little novice, racked by the babble of the child with sharp stabs of meaning, of which the speaker is all unaware. A convent song of "Too late" seems to ring in her ears her own doom ; she feels as if the child's indignation against the "wicked queen" would kill her ; she is driven to suspect the abbess and her nuns of unkind purpose, and breaks out at last in angry reproach against the child,—

"Set on to plague

And play upon and harry me, petty
spy

And traitress,"—

only to acknowledge, an instant after,
that—

No. 1.

"The simple, fearful child
Meant nothing, but my own too fearful
guilt,
Simpler than any child, betrays itself."

Had Mr. Tennyson stopped at this picture of the Queen's self-reproach, he would already have produced a noble work ; more fruitful of good, perhaps, to many, than a hundred routine sermons on the seventh commandment. For he has made us feel already, as only true genius can, the self-punishing power of guilty love. A vulgar moralist might have made Lancelot unlovable, Guinevere unfaithful to her lover. It is with admirable subtlety of truth that Mr. Tennyson has painted Lancelot's character up to the very ideal of knightliness, that he has shown him full of kindly courtesy, full of frank admiration for the very king whom he is betraying, humble in his might so far as to acknowledge that—

"In me there dwells

No greatness, save it be *some far-off
touch*

*Of greatness, to know well I am not
great."*

It is with equal truth and subtlety that he has painted Guinevere, though of a less noble nature in herself, yet wrapped up entirely in her guilty love, and only unlovable through its own passionate unreason. We are thus led necessarily to sever the sin from the individuality of the sinner, in our sense of its righteous and inevitable doom. We see how all Lancelot's precious gifts of strength, and courage, and faithfulness, and manliness, and humility ; all Guinevere's precious gifts of beauty, and womanly fascination, and passionate affection, are clouded and flawed by the evil nature of the link which unites them, and serve only to make it gall them the more. But this is not enough for Mr. Tennyson. He has a higher lesson to teach than that of the adulterer's anguish of self-reproach. He knows that beyond the black terrors of the violated law lies a day-streak of forgiveness and hope. He is a Christian poet, and

he feels that even in these seeming arabesques of wild fancy there must be a Gospel to be found.

It is only with Arthur's appearance to Guinevere that the title of the book is fully indicated. The "faultless king" has hitherto earned more of our pity than sympathy. We have rather felt, with Guinevere, that he was

"A moral child, without the craft to rule,
Else had he not lost me."

His very introduction in the last Idyll does not predispose us in his favour. The Queen, immersed in her dreams, has just recalled her first glance of him, when she thought him

"Cold,
High, self-contained, and passionless."

We are inclined to think the same, when he begins with—

"Voice
Monotonous and hollow, like a ghost's
Denouncing judgment."

And yet, even whilst he is seemingly wandering almost prosily away into the story of his wrecked and shattered ideal of the Table Round—mixing his lament with words of shame to Guinevere,—we feel that he is not only rising higher and higher before us, but lifting her with him. For he is dealing with her, not as one fallen so low as to be unable to comprehend him, but as one who can enter yet into his feelings, who is alive to his reproaches. Deep already, we feel, is the tenderness concealed in those two lines which precede the story:—

"Bear with me for the last time while
I show,
Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou
hast sinned."

Deep, again, is the tremulous pathos of those other lines:—

"And in thy bowers of Camelot or of
Usk,
Thy shadow still would glide from
room to room;"—

even though preceding the stern announcement,—

"Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy
shame."

And then comes at last that passage, as noble of its kind, I believe, as any ever penned by poet or dramatist since the world was—more touching, I think, than any in our language, except King Lear's lament over Cordelia, beginning (p. 253) with—

"But how to take last leave of all I
loved,"—

and concluding with Arthur's farewell and blessing. We see there, risen to its fullest height, the true, noble purpose of the writer. We see that which Christianity alone has made possible or intelligible—a representation of the absolutely unselfish love, the love of the worthy for the unworthy,—the saving love, which overcomes sin by excess of loving:—

"Let no man dream but that I love
thee still.
Hereafter, in that world where all are
pure,
We two may meet before high God,
and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me
thine, and know
I am thine husband." . . .

We feel already, as the King speaks, that the victory is won, that the Queen's eyes have surely been opened, even as our own have been, to the reality of the deep well-spring of passionate life which that seemingly passionless figure has been bearing within it. The rest follows almost as of course. The woman to whom he could speak thus was sure to understand him. Yet we rejoice none the less to see her take hold of the consolation he has held out to her:—

"And blessed be the King, who hath
forgiven
My wickedness to him, and left me
hope
That in mine own heart I can live
down sin,"

And be his mate hereafter in the
heavens
Before high God."

We understand clearly her cry—

"Is there none
Will tell the King I love him, though
so late?"

And we feel no shock at being told, in
conclusion, that the Queen, once repent-
ant of her sin,

"For her good deeds, and her pure life,
And for the power of ministration in
her,"

was eventually held worthy to become
the head of the holy sisterhood.

The last word then,—the key-note,
the crowning lesson of the whole of the
book,—is Reformation through Love;
Love abounding beyond all sin; in
other words, the very Gospel of Christ's
Redemption.

Nor let it be said, indeed, that this
high Christian purpose is but an acci-
dent of the catastrophe. In the first
place, unless I am greatly mistaken, its
connexion with that catastrophe is Mr.
Tennyson's own. Whilst, as will be
shown in part hereafter, he has followed
closely the writers of the middle ages in
the conduct of his three earlier Idylls,
and in the leading events of the last, the
distinctive moral features of it,—Ar-
thur's seeking an interview with Guin-
evere after her flight, his forgiveness of
her, and her too late discovery of her
folly in not having loved him rather
than Lancelot,—belong entirely to Mr.
Tennyson; nor have I found a trace of
them in any early romance. But the
Christian spirit which inspired this beau-
tiful modification of the legend breathes
throughout the book; witness the noble
passage in Enid about Edyrn's refor-
mation:—

"Have you looked
At Edyrn? have you seen how nobly
changed?"

This Christian spirit, pervading the
whole work, is, I take it, the best answer
to one class of objectors to Mr. Tennyson's

poem. Parts of the book, they may
admit, are very beautiful, especially
the last; yet one cannot but regret that
time and genius should be spent upon
so "revolting" a subject. Well, the
subject is revolting; we admit it. Yet
surely not so much so as many which
are recorded for our instruction in Holy
Writ, which we durst not even wish to
excise from it. If it is not recorded for
our instruction here also,—if it be
merely, like the Cenci of Shelley, a
study of the revolting,—the blame may
be deserved. But, unfortunately, the
"revolting" is all around us. Year-
long betrayals of the husband by the
wife, of the friend by the friend, are
not the monopoly of the mythical or
semi-mythical personages of the Arthu-
rian legends. When such events occur,
is it sufficient to turn the face away in
silence? Do they bear with them no
lesson which deserves to be recorded for
the benefit of others? If they bear any,
is it one which the poet has no right to
frame into a fictitious picture, to present
unto us in the persons of imaginary
heroes? If he brings it out aright,
will the time and genius spent on the
task be thrown away? I take it, that,
fairly looked at, the "Idylls of the
King" are in themselves the reply to
these questions.

Let no one say that the poet's teaching
in such matters is useless or ineffective.
Certainly, one does not expect that the
story of Lancelot and Guinevere will
recall man or woman from actual sin,
committed or about to be committed,
like the preaching of a Samuel Wilber-
force, a Baptist Noel, a Lacordaire.
But there is an age at which it would
be folly to underrate the vast influence
of poetry on the human spirit—first-
rate poetry especially; that age when it
is just trembling on the verge of matu-
rity, when all the senses have blossomed
into fullest life, when fancies are just
ready to kindle into passions. Poetry
then speaks with a charm which nothing
else can rival: if it be true and noble,
lifting the soul, moulding it to high
and generous purpose, inspiring it with
instinctive horror for that which is foul

and base; if it be hollow and false itself, lowering and corroding imperceptibly the soul that feeds on it. I take it that no one can measure the blessing for our present generation of readers, of having grown up under the shadow of Wordsworth and Tennyson, rather than under that of Byron. I take it that no one can exaggerate the service rendered to morality by Tennysonian pictures of Lancelots and Guineveres, whose one sin mars all their worth and loveliness, and turns all their qualities and virtues into means of self-torturing retribution.

I have coupled Mr. Tennyson's name with that of Wordsworth, as one of the powers for good of the present age. I believe, however, that Mr. Tennyson's influence grasps those who become subject to it with far more living might than that of Wordsworth. Not that there is the least need for going into those accusations of Pantheism which it has of late years been the fashion to launch against the elder poet. Nothing can be more alien to the Pantheistic spirit—to the vague indifferentism, the inextricable confusion of right and wrong which it begets—than the strong, almost hard, sense of duty and righteousness which runs through the whole of Wordsworth's life and poetry. Still, there is no doubt that the human element is too much subdued, or rather viewed too coldly, in his poems, to render him of much help to those who are struggling and fainting in the battle of life. You must have toiled some way up to his own mountain peaks before he will stretch out to you a hand of succour and fellowship. Man, in his poetry, is always more or less in the background; he is studied rather as a part of the landscape than in himself. What distinguishes Mr. Tennyson is an intense feeling of personality, coupled with an appreciation of nature no less keen and full than that of his predecessor. We feel in dealing with him that he has fought with the same foes, wrestled with the same doubts, as ourselves, and won his blessing from the conflict; and one grows thus to perceive that,—although

dogma in his verse is rather hinted at than set forth,—although he has humbly spoken of himself as

"But an earthly muse,
And owning but a little art
To lull with song an aching heart,
And render human love his dues"—

yet he is essentially a great Christian poet.

It is of course necessary that a poet's work—especially when so carefully and thoughtfully wrought out as that of Mr. Tennyson—should justify itself, without reference to the performances of other men. Still, the "Idylls of the King" cannot be fully appreciated without a comparison with the sources from which they are, or appear to be, derived,—such as the "Mabinogion" for "Enid," the "Prince Arthur" of Mallory for a large portion of "Elaine" and "Guinevere."¹ How different is the tone of the whole volume from that of those originals! The "stainless king" of the Idylls is by no means stainless in "Prince Arthur;" on the contrary, his overthrow by the means of his nephew Modred is in the elder writer the doom of a fearful sin, since Modred is at once his son and his nephew (Part I. c. xvii.). The Jovian deception (c. ii.) to which his birth is owing, according to the legend of Uther Pendragon, is by Mr. Tennyson skilfully kept out of sight. The story of Elaine in Mallory, touching as it remains after all, is clouded by suspicious analogies with the earlier and much less pleasant tale of an Elaine who became, by a deception certainly far less offensive than that of Uther Pendragon, since it involved only the sacrifice of her own honour, the mother of Galahad (Pt. III. c. ii.). The later story in itself is rendered offensive at one of its most pathetic moments by the abrupt proposal of the lady that

¹ I say "appear to be derived," as Mr. Tennyson has no doubt handled the original romances from which Sir Thomas Mallory compiled his work; but the "Prince Arthur," being so far better known, supplies the most obvious standard of comparison.

Lancelot shall take her for his mistress (c. exxiii.) if he will not for his wife. Compare with this the delicacy of the passage in the Idyll:—

"'No, no,' she cried, 'I care not to be wife,
But to be with you still, to see your face,
To serve you, and to follow you through the world.'
And Lancelot answer'd, 'Nay; the world, the world,
All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
To blare its own interpretation'"—

in which all the possible consequences of the girlish folly of her proposal are so tenderly pointed out as mere hypothetical calumnies. Or see in the "Prince Arthur" (Pt. III. c. cxliv.) how the final surprise which irrevocably compromises Lancelot and the Queen, and so forces on the catastrophe, seizes the pair, if not in the actual flagrancy of sin, yet at least under no extenuating circumstances, and not, as the modern poet has beautifully indicated, to soften the tones of the picture, amidst their last farewells. It is thus only that we learn to feel what a pure heart and fancy have been at work amidst the gross elements of the older legends; how, if Mr. Tennyson has deemed it right to treat a subject painful in itself, he has carefully divested it of all details which were not indispensably necessary to the bringing out of its lessons.

It is indeed a study, curious and interesting in itself, to collate, step by step, Mr. Tennyson's work with those older ones on which it is founded. Take, for instance, the "Geraint ap Erbin" of the Mabinogion, as contrasted with "Enid." This is a beautiful tale in itself, and—whether weeded already by Lady Charlotte Guest's hand or not—free from immoral details. At a cursory glance, the poem seems little more than the prose story versified, with additional developments, so closely does it follow

the latter in almost all its details. Arthur's court, held at Whitsuntide, at Caerleon, on the Usk, the forester of Dean with his tale of the tall white stag, the hunting party ordered for the morrow, Guinevere's petition for leave to attend it, her oversleeping herself, her starting with a single attendant, her being overtaken by Geraint with his golden-hilted sword, and purple scarf with the golden apples at the ends, their staying to hear the hounds, the passing of the dwarf, the lady, and the knight, the sending of Guinevere's maiden to the dwarf to ask the name of his master, the very words almost of their conversation, the cut of the dwarf's whip when she turns towards his master, Geraint's own approach, the receipt by him of the like insult, his abstaining from instant revenge, and determination to follow the knight till he find arms to fight him with, all—to confine the study to a few pages only—are in the prose story. "Mere copying! rank plagiarism!" common minds would exclaim, according as they are contemptuous or virulent. Not so, good sirs. No more copying than when an artist paints any ideal subject from actual realities; no more plagiarism than when he takes a living woman's likeness and refines it into a Madonna. Compare the two more closely and deeply, and you will find that all the *soul* of the story is the poet's own; that by a thousand subtly tender touches he has raised the wild Welsh tale into a noble poem. For instance, the Mabinogion tells us that Geraint, when insulted by the dwarf, "put his hand upon the hilt of his sword; but he took counsel with himself, and considered that it would be no vengeance for him to slay the dwarf, and to be attacked unarmed by the armed knight; so he returned to where Givenhwyvar was;" thus assigning to his act of self-restraint a purely selfish and, to say the least, prudential motive. Hear now Mr. Tennyson:—

"His quick instinctive hand
Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him:
But he, from his exceeding manfulness

*And pure nobility of temperament,
Wroth to be wroth at such a worm,
refrained
From e'en a word, and so returning,
said," &c.*

So, in the description of the repast at Earl Yniol's, while the prose narrator is content to say that "Geraint sat between the hoary-headed man and his wife, and the maiden served them, and they eat and drank," the poet, after carefully embalming in his verse the quaint "costrel" and "manchet-bread" of the prose, adds that exquisite passage—

"And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,

Geraint had longing in him evermore
To stoop and kiss the tender little
thumb

That crossed the trencher as she laid
it down," &c.

So again, the passage in the *Mabinogion*, when Enid is being arrayed for the wedding: "'Let not the damsel array herself,' said he, 'except in her vest and her veil, until she come to the Court of Arthur, to be clad by Givenhwyar in such garments as she may choose,'—so the maiden did not array herself,"—is the sole germ in the prose story of all that beautiful portion of the poem respecting the faded silk and the costly dress, so full of meaning, and which brings out so exquisitely the character of Enid, and connects so skillfully the two separate phases of her history. In the prose there is no hint whatever that, when suspected by her lord, Enid attires herself in her old bridal dress. It is only stated that, by his command, she "clothed herself in her meanest garments." And thus the poet proceeds, seeing at a glance what materials the story offers meet to be worked up into his cunning verse, but looking far deeper into it than the narrator could look himself, taking hold of it in order to bring out nobler meanings and a higher purpose than the Welshman ever conceived of, and so rejecting with unerring hand whatever details fit

not with his purpose, adding, with equally unerring hand, such as serve to clear and point the new meanings which he has to bring out.

What has been said of "Enid," and the "Geraint ap Erbin," of the *Mabinogion*, applies with even greater force—as may have been inferred already—to so much of Mr. Tennyson's volume as is to be traced to Mallory's *Prince Arthur*. Enough has been said ere this to show that, in dealing with it, Mr. Tennyson has not only, as with the *Mabinogion*, wrought the polished metal out of the rough ungainly ore, but has too often had to evolve, as by the subtle chemistry of the living organism, nutriment from poison.

At the risk, however, of seeming hypercritical, I have one fault to find with the morality of the work. It surely is a serious mistake to have represented Arthur free from self-reproach at the last. It was partly his fault that Guinevere had sinned,—at least, that she had sinned so long. His forgiveness is too self-righteous (indeed, it is the only specimen of Byronism in the book, recalling, though in a much milder form of course, that insufferable piece of cant, "And my curse is—forgiveness"). He has no right to speak as if Guinevere had not been given into his keeping, and as if he had not failed to keep her safely, by neglecting to understand her feelings and her character. It is true that he has sacrificed his wife to his ideal Round Table, and the discovery ought well-nigh to overwhelm him. I do not mean to say that there is any artistic fault in the development of the character and situation as they are presented to us. It is quite consistent with all that is shown of Arthur elsewhere, that he should not feel this self-reproach. It is quite natural that Guinevere should not feel the absence of it. What she has missed seeing in Arthur hitherto is the man beneath the saint; that discovery is what transforms her into a new woman. But, for Mr. Tennyson's own sake, and that of his readers, he ought not to leave any with the impression that this lofty

self-righteous Arthur is his ideal of true manliness. The Idyll, as I have observed, is a short one; a page or two additional in some future edition will easily suffice to supply what I have pointed out as wanting for the complete perfection of the picture.

And thus we take leave of this, Mr. Tennyson's greatest work hitherto. His greatest; yet not the one which will exercise the most influence. The "Idylls of the King" can never become such a bosom-friend as the "In Memoriam,"—that golden book, perhaps (take it all in all) the most precious literary fruit of the nineteenth century hitherto, which so many have carped at at first, and learnt to value at last—which none could ever appreciate without prizing it ever more and more. The Idylls have too much wholeness and unity in themselves to admit of being read and re-read by a few pages at a time, celled almost at hazard, as when we tell off the diamonds and rubies of which that other poem is strung together. Nor will they come home to the hearts of the many like some of Mr. Tennyson's smaller pieces, or even as the wild passion of "Maud," with its keen appreciation of existing social evils.

It is, indeed, doubted by many, whether Mr. Tennyson can ever become a poet of the people. Of course, after "Maud," in particular, no one can doubt his vivid sense of the present. After the "Golden Year," no one can doubt that—let him sing ever so sweetly about chivalry and its Round Tables—he is not one of those wry-necked idealists who are for ever looking backward at some past Eden, and so lose their way and their followers amidst the sloughs and quagmires of the day. But Mr. Tennyson's colouring, it is said by these critics, is too luscious for the dwellers amid grey smoke and fog; his thought is too subtle even for cultivated minds, let alone the rude; his style is too peculiar and refined for the unlettered. There is a measure of truth, no doubt, in the observation, although I have seen, some years back, an audience, mostly of poor women, convulsed with laughter by

"Amphion," when read by the Rev. Archer Gurney in the schoolroom of St. Peter's Church, Crown Street, Soho; and have seen also working men of the superior ranks in their order derive real enjoyment from some of Mr. Tennyson's more serious poems, "Maud" more particularly. Yet there is no doubt that for such readers the "Idylls" will have but few attractions. We are no longer in the days when romances of chivalry formed the staple reading of youth; and the acquaintance, even of cultivated minds, with this branch of literature, is probably in general overrated by those persons who take delight in it. To the great mass of readers in the working, and what may be called the quasi-working classes (clerks, assistants, and such like), King Arthur and his Court are personages very far removed from all subjects of ordinary interest. The "fashionable vice," though, alas! far from unknown amongst them, exhibits generally for them few of those softer features which it may assume in tales of knighthood, which form, perhaps, its chief danger among the more leisurely classes. And so it will be only one here and there who will feel how *true* the poem is under its fictitious garb; what noble, practical, human purpose pervades all its airy fancies and quaint conceits. Strange to say, so far as my experience goes, of the four Idylls, it is "Vivien" which seems to take most hold, for the present, of minds of the classes to which I am referring. A prison school-master,—surely no mean authority on such matters,—has remarked to me on the deep "knowledge of human nature" which it evinces.

There is yet room amongst us, surely, for a poet who, in plain but not too archaic Saxon, choosing some subject not too alien from ordinary sympathies, should know how to go straight home to the hearts of the great mass of his countrymen, by broad pictures of human pathos, and clear exhibitions of lofty purpose. Mr. Tennyson has been hitherto, except in a few flashes here and there, rather a teacher of teachers, a poet of poets, than such a writer as I

have described. That he cannot show himself such yet, no one would dare to pronounce, who measures the marvellous growth in power, in depth, in mastery of every sort, over feeling, thought, style, which is evinced by a comparison

of the "Lady of Shalott" with the same subject in "Elaine." The relation of the two is, in point of art, like that of a pen-scratch to a furrow; in point of purpose, of the shell to the kernel.

COLLOQUY OF THE ROUND TABLE

SCENE.—*The Room of the Round Table, lit up: a range of busts of the supreme Dead of various nations along one of the walls, with a mask of Shakespeare from the Stratford Bust in the middle, a little above the level of the rest, and let into the wall over the mantelpiece: on the other walls, engraved portraits of the select Living of our own land. In the middle of the Room is the ROUND TABLE; on which are several brown jugs, an array of glasses, and a bunch of long clay pipes, of Glasgow make, tipped delicately with green wax.*

Enter SERIOUS WILLIAM, who walks up and down, soliloquizing.

"ANOTHER society formed! How many such has London seen! Back to the days of Chaucer my mind carries me, vaguely perceiving here and there, even in the antique city, as he knew it, groups of men met in the old gabled houses to talk over affairs now uncouth to us! Thence to Queen Bess's golden reign, when Raleigh brought in the weed, and our action was dashed with the pale cast of thought! And so, through visions of successive clubs, more numerous as London widens its limits and its roar becomes more multitudinous—Raleigh's and Shakespeare's *Mermaid*, Ben Jonson's *Apollo*, Dryden's at Will's, Addison's and Pope's at Button's, the great Dr. Samuel's anywhere from Cornhill to Charing Cross—on to our own luxurious days, when clubs, so named, are palaces in Pall Mall, and the true clubs are fragments of these or less visible gatherings! What talk in these meetings of the past, what world after world of things to talk of! Vanished now equally the things and the talk—vanished like the smoke-puffs that were blown by the talkers! The bones of the old clubmen are in the mould of London churchyards, within view of the windows whence they gazed

while living. As little of the total visage and bearing of past humanity as has been saved for us in these few stony busts, so little of all that has been said or done survives in human memory. Still, in each age, as it comes, how fully the transmitted life beats! Still is each moment its own self-sufficient world of contemporary bustle; still in the midst sit the groups of talkers, probing it on all sides, and seeking to reduce it. Why not we, too, in this room, round this table, in our turn? Ye stony representatives of the past, and ye, too, our more familiar countrymen of the present, under your auspices we meet; may our meetings—

[The clocks are heard striking nine.]

No longer Big Ben! How deep and soft was his tone! London wanted that addition. In the vast flat city how few objects hitherto, natural or artificial, dear to all the inhabitants in common, or telling at once magnetically on the collective nerve! St. Paul's, perhaps, and the Abbey;—but what objects have the Londoners loved so well as to single them out from the rest for the crowning honour of personification? Till now only Old Father Thames and the old Lady of Threadneedle Street! To these we thought we had added Big Ben. How over the miles of streets, out to the

fields and highways in which they end, he threw nocturnally his dome of sound!"

[*Vigorous knocking below: many footsteps on the stair: enter at once other Brethren of the Round Table. They salute SERIOUS WILLIAM; throw off hats and outer coats; and, after some minutes, are seated round the Table—SERIOUS WILLIAM in the chair under the mask of Shakespeare, the others as they choose, but with several chairs still unoccupied. The Brethren are talking together in twos and threes, when SERIOUS WILLIAM rises, and there is a hush to hear him.*]

"Brethren of the Round Table—We have agreed to meet here once a month. During the times that intervene between our meetings, we shall all be out in the general world, each on his own responsibility, attending to his own particular business, or following his own particular whims. But from these excursions into the world we return punctually, every thirtieth or thirty-first day, to this our rendezvous. Therefore we call ourselves the ROUND TABLE. Each of us coming here will bring to the rest reports of what adventures worth relating he may have met with in the interval. For adventures there still are—not the same, perhaps, as when first, in the mingled wreck of Briton and Saxon, Heathenism and Christianity, which the withdrawing Roman left in these islands, Arthur drew all the knighthood-errant together. Not the same literally, for then besides the war of man with man, there were giants on our hills, and our woods teemed with enchantments, and there were neighing horrors on the watch at all our river-fords at even-fall, and dragons and demons plumed in our quagmires. All that brood of forms is dead; and in the same museum in which exhumed remains of them may be studied, are to be seen also, equally obsolete, the armour and weapons with which battle was done against them. Our Round Table is set up in a very different world. Different the monsters and different the weapons and ways of attack. Yet, in reality, how identical! Whether our excursions hence are to the west or to the east, to the north or to

the south, the element will yield us adventures on which we may compare notes when we meet. "Whom have you rescued since our last meeting?" we may say to each other; "What have you been pitching into?" "How often and how vigorously have you pitched into yourself?" And so, from comparing notes, we may learn what mischief is most in season, and may even have hints for our next month's adventures. But our Brotherhood is not one of action only; nor will it be the business of our meetings solely to tell our adventures. The spirit of rectification or knighthood militant is that in which all things are seen as either black or white, or in which the sense is given over mainly to the quest of this vehement contrast. But the colours of things are not only black and white, but red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet, with all the shades and combinations that these can give rise to. The spirit which appreciates to the full all this natural variety, and is not perpetually on the search for the black and the white, is the spirit of contemplation or of humour; and this is the spirit of knighthood meditative or of knighthood joyaunt. Our meetings here shall be for speculation as we will, for frolic as it may turn out. We shall talk of all things under the sun, and of as many above it as we can know or dream of. All moods shall be ours; we shall let the fancies flow. Whatever comes into our heads let us speak right out here among ourselves, not mincing it, nor caring which of the accepted confessions it squares with, nor whether it squares with any. And moreover as the knights had their friendly jousts, and unhorsed each other in sport and for exercise, let none of us spare another, and let none of us take amiss the knock, or the tumble from his hobby, which a brother gives. Laws we shall have none; but, where need arises, it will be for me, as your appointed president, to preserve limits. I have said that laws we shall have none; but, ere I sit down, this I must qualify in one particular. All brotherhoods like ours must have the material ministrants of their festivity; the very gods themselves

could not converse heartily except over ambrosia for food and nectar for tippie. Our provision in this respect is modest. Beer and tobacco—these and these only are permitted amongst us.

[*Mr. ANDREW McTAGGART, one of the brothers, seated nearly opposite the speaker, is visibly moved.*]

There may be abstinence from both or either, and weaker fluids will not be counted; but there is to be no movement upwards in the direction of wine. Ours is to be exclusively a Beer and Tobacco Parliament. Within the limits of the two articles named, however, all the varieties are to be eligible—under the head of Beer, either the black kind, subdivisible into porter and stout; or the amber kind, known as Ale, and subdivisible into the mild, the old, and the bitter; nay, the combination of the black and amber, known as Half-and-Half, will not be forbidden. And so, the Tobacco may be taken either as cigar or as pipe; and, under Pipe, either as meerschaum or as clay, and either as long clay or as cutty. The mind of the Club in these specialities for the present is indicated by the supplies now on the Table.—Gentlemen, I have done."

[*A general movement of satisfaction, amid which most begin to finger the pipes; interrupted at last by Mr. ANDREW McTAGGART, who addresses the chair:*

"I dinna object, Mr. Chairman, to onything you've said; but there's just ae point that, I think, micht be reconsidered in the arrangements you've laid down. What you said about proheebitin' wine, I perfectly agree with. I canna bear to hear folk aye speakin' about claret, as if they couldna be jolly under a guinea ilka time, and claret indicated a refined sowl. But I think it wouldna be inconsistent with the general principles which you, Sir, have sae loominously expounded, if we alloo'd, at our meetings, to them thet likit it, a little het water and speerits—say, whuskey-toddy.

All. Oh! oh! oh!

Mr. McTaggart. There are various grounds on which I micht argue the

point; but I will stet only twa o' them. First, historically and cheemically I think there is a naatural mutual adaptation between Tobacco and Alcohol. On the cheemical pairt o' the adaptation I wunna insist; for that is a maitter o' personal taste and pheesiological experience. But the historical connexion o' the twa substances—in whilk also the cheemical congruity is involved to ony comprehensive mind—can be made verra clear. Folk are awfu' fond noo-a-days o' dividin' the past existence o' the world into stages—three or four or five, but generally three—just as if the world had been made on the principle o' a pocket-telescope, to be pulled oot into slides. Without committin' mysel' to this, I think it canna be denied that, for a lang lang time after wine and ale were baith weel kent, the feck o' the world got on without tobacco. There was, in short, a Pre-Tobacca period in human history; and to that period wine and ale baith belang. A' the while, however, or a bit o' the while, the red devils o' Aztecs in America were puffin' awa' comfortable ower the weed, sittin' by themselfs and saying naething to naeboddy. Weel, America was discovered; tobacco was brocht over; and it ran roon' our cheek o' the planet, as fast as pipes could be lichtit. Noo, was it not aboot this verra time—I wunna be preceese—that folk fand out the essence o' wine and ale and a' the auld drinks, and began to distil a' kinds o' stuff, no for perfumes (whilk they had been doin' for mony a day) but for strong waters for the mouth; whereof the best is Scotch whuskey? When Nature pops up twa things at ance to the surface, or the mind o' man casts up twa inventions on the same wave, depend upon it, there is a relation between them. Things contemporaneous are things consentaneous. Sae what can be clearer than that tobacco and whuskey were meant to-gang thegither—the ane to correc' and qualify the ither?

Mr. Loftus Smart (raising his eye-glass, and surveying McTaggart with disgust). There is an admirable largeness in your reasoning, Sir. What do you say, on your principle, to the claims of coffee?

Mr. McTaggart (looking at Mr. Smart for a little, and then indulging in a low whistle as the result of his inspection). I'm no speakin' about coffee, man.—And noo, gentlemen, for my second argument. I'm sure you dinna mean to neglect the Scottish element in your meetings, or to show any disrespect to it. It's that French chiel, Comte, I think,—about whom they're makin' sic a claver here, after he's dead, puir fallow, when they nicht hae kent a' about him twal' years ago, and gotten through him and been dune wi' him,—it's that French chiel, Comte, that has a speculation about a gran' Western Positive Committee of Representatives o' different nations, that are to sit in Paris, and superintend a' the common affairs o' Europe, and gee-up or check the different civilizations, sax or aucht at a time, as Ducrow did his horses. It was to be a Pentarchy, at first, that was to be represented, and the deputies were to be ane and twenty—sax frae France, as the best at everything; five frae Great Britain, for its practical sagacity; four frae Germany, on account o' its wunnerfu' power o' abstraction; three frae Italy, on account o' its admirable aesthetic spontaneity; and three frae Spain, as the nation maist remarkable for its sense o' personal dignity combined wi' its catholicity o' sentiment—

Mr. Loftus Smart (uneasily). What, on earth, is he driving at?

Mr. McTaggart. I'm drivin' at the whuskey-toddy.—Noo, wherever Great Britain acts or sits—whether in Positive Western Committees or anywhere else—I'm sure you wunna deny that scope ought to be given to the Scottish element in her composition. What ought to be the numerical value assigned to Scotland oot o' any number representin' Great Britain in the aggregate, I wunna tak upon me to say. I may hae my ain opinions on that subject. But you'll surely alloo something. And so, as you are to hae the Scottish element represented personally in these meetings, it wad be but common respect to the northern pairt o' the island to hae upon

your table a little o' the beverage that comes maist kindly to its natives, and that has been identified for a hunner' years at the least wi' a' her social proceedins and a' her leeterture.

Mr. Bidder. Identified too much, I fear, Mr. McTaggart? Do you know the statistics of whiskey-drinking in Scotland? Would it not be better if the English taste for beer were to spread northward? Would not the mere difference of beverage be a national gain for you?

Mr. McTaggart. Haud there, haud there, Mr. Bidder. I ken a' that; I ken a' that. O, man, it's ae thing to bleeze awa' in words on a subject afore folk, and anither to think on it, and think on it, a' by yoursel'. Sometimes, sittin', wi' my pipe in my mouth, and my tumbler afore me, lookin' into the fire, I think wi' mysel' what a cleaner and clearer warld it wad be, if Alcohol and a' its kin, ay, and Tobacca too, were banished oot o't; and I wonder whether a time will ever come when Society will hae strength o' mind, considerin' the ill they hae dune, and the perfect possibility o' gettin' on without them, to vote their extinction a'thegether, and pile up somewhere, for future generations to gape at, a Ben Nevis o' broken bottles mixed wi' pipe-stalks. For Scotland, in parteeular, I am sometimes sae wae that, wi' a' the clashes about Leeberty, I'm no sure but, if the hail country could be putten under a Maine Law for thirty years good by any kind o' force whatever, I shud hae sma' pity for the dacent drinkers deprived o' their moderate alloance. What a veesion o' the country at the end o' the thirty years—a' the artisans strollin' aboot in the evening wi' their families in clean blue coats wi' brass buttons, the verra taste o' whuskey oot o' their recollection, and the cravin' for't oot o' their mouths, and ilka ane o' them wi' siller in the savins' bank, and plenty o' books in his parlour! Maybe, they wad just gae back again; wha kens? But, Mr. Chairman, supposin' that I was to send in an anker o' whuskey to the club at my ain expense, wad there be any

objection to a little o't appearin' regularly on the table at our meetins, for the purpose o' toddy to them that might prefer it?

Serious William. Mr. McTaggart, it cannot be. These pipes which we are smoking are of Glasgow make; let that suffice as recognition of the Scottish element.

Mr. McTaggart. Weel, weel; I'll say nae mair aboot it. Rax me ower the jug wi' the strongest ale, will you?

[The McTAGGART relapses into silence, and the conversation becomes more general. Some considerable time passes, during which the glasses form acquaintance with the jugs, puffs ascend here and there from the smokers of the party, and there is scattered talk on various private subjects.]

Serious William. So the Peace of Villafranca is now ratified—converted into the Treaty of Zurich.

Mr. Loftus Smart. May we consider the Italian question as shelved?

Mr. Ernest Newlight (a keen, eager-looking young man, with fair hair, and a delicate complexion, which flushes hectically as he speaks). No; happen what may for the present, the Italian question will yet be a European one. I prophesy that Europe will yet have another great war of religion, arising out of the question of the Papacy and its relations. Its first form will probably be a determination of the Catholic powers to maintain the theory, so preposterously advanced in 1849, even by liberal French politicians like Thiers and De Tocqueville, that Central Italy must always remain an exceptional part of the earth, without rights of its own, in order to afford geographical root and financial nutriment to that great tree of the Spiritual Papacy, whose branches overshadow the nations.

Mr. McTaggart. Come! come! If we tak' to prophesying, we had better send for Dr. Cummin' at ance, and get the real article. I declare I'm tired o' hearin' o' naething but aboot Italy. I wish that our political illuminawtors, instead o' flashin' their lanterns through lenses up and down that lang peninsula

o' the Mediterrawnean, wad just turn their lights doon a bit on things nearer hame. There's the strikes, noo! That question is just like a great strong beast rushin' on: folk are grippin' at it, and tumblin' ower't wi' tryin' to grip it, and ruggin' oot nievefu's o' hair frae its hide, and cryin' oot, "I've catcht it, I've stoppit it;" but de'il a bit is the beast catcht or stoppit for a' that, and naebody has onything left in his haund fer his trouble but a sma' nievefu' o' hair.

Mr. Bidder. The fiercest onslaught yet on strikes and their abettors that I have seen is the article in the *Edinburgh Review*.

Serious William. What is its tenor?

Mr. Bidder. It is entitled "Secret Organization of Trades," and its main notion is that, just as some foreign countries are pervaded by secret political conspiracies, so is British society at this day mined and honeycombed underneath by a secret organization of the working classes against their employers and the public. There are, at present, says the writer, 2,000 Trades' Unions in Britain, counting 600,000 members, and therefore commanding the sympathies and the actions of at least $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of the population. Strikes, he says, are but the occasional and local outbursts of this huge subterranean conspiracy—"this Socialistic Despotism," as he calls it, "enthroned in Trades' Union public-houses;" and the recent strike of the seven London Building Trades will do good if it calls attention to the whole subject of Trades' Unions and their results.

Serious William. What immediate remedies are suggested?

Mr. Bidder. Changes in the law, to enable it more surely and swiftly to punish intimidation and persecution of Non-unionists and conspiracy against masters; and, in addition, a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry.

Mr. Ernest Newlight. So far good perhaps; but I cannot think that an article, written with such an *animus*, and ending in nothing more, contains all the philosophy of the subject. In the

first place, if there are 600,000 men associated at this moment in Trades' Unions, I think we may make up our minds that Trades' Unions are a "great fact"—that they cannot be put down, but must go on and take us with them. But may there not be more in these associations and the tendency to them than that mere exploded doctrine of Protection, that confused-headedness on economic points, which is all that some see? The ideal state of industrial society with the opponents of Trades' Unions would seem to be one framed on a system of universal bargaining between individual and individual—a system of universal piece-work—every man for himself, to work as much and earn as much as he can, and the Devil to take the hindmost. This is an intelligible system; perhaps it may be economically the best.

Mr. McTaggart. O ay! The world's a tract o' land containin' a leemited quantity o' hares. A lot o' dogs o' different capacities have been lat loose upon't; the strong dogs, the swift dogs, and the cunnin' dogs catch the hares and grow fat, and their breeds are perpetuated; the ithers dee out. That's the way that nature has for perpetually improvin' herself—savin' the best o' ilka ane o' her generations, to be the beginnin' o' a new ane. A' gaes on by the force o' a theo-diabolic evolution that has been makin' things and crunchin' them up aye since afore the stars; and happiness is but a human conception flung in at our bit o' the process and no likely to stick. Dinna glower at me, Mr. Newlicht; I'm no sure that I'm serious.

Mr. Ernest Newlight. Our workmen, it seems, won't have that law. Trades' Unions mean that they won't have it. What are they but a repudiation of the principle of "each one for himself, and the Devil take the hindmost?" There is a danger that in such associations the terms should be calculated for the low level of the mass of inferior workmen, to the injury of the superior ones, and so to the dulling down of the general mettle and spirit

of men. But this allowed for, is there not something humanly 'fine in the sentiment which leads to the association? Can it be mere fear and tyranny, mere public-house oratory and plotting, that maintains the Trades' Unions? May there not be more in them? May it not be their purification and development, and not their destruction, that we ought to desire?

Mr. Loftus Smart. Interrogation is a convenient figure of speech, when one is in a cloud, and wants to suggest light beyond.

Mr. McTaggart. It's a gran' mood, the mood interrogative, man. Dinna malign 't. It's God's gift to the strugglin' speerit; and, besides, it doesna commit you ower muckle. But, what noise is that?

[A noise on the stairs, up which come, first, a sort of *tol-de-rol* chorus, secondly a heavy body. Enter, to the wonder and joy of the company, a sun-burnt jolly-looking party, in a suit of heather mixture, shooting boots, and travelling cap.]

Serious William. Well, this is luck! What wind blows you here, Sir John? When our proud young porter left the summons at your chambers, the answer was, "Shooting in Norfolk."

Sir John. So I am in spirit, and hope to be, in the flesh, to-morrow. I came up on business to-day, and found that precious summons of yours; so here I am for the nonce. What's it all about?

Serious William. You read the summons? Will you be a brother good and true of the Round Table?

Sir John. Hang your Round Table! I'll come here once a month, if that's it, and drink beer and talk nonsense with the roundest of you.

[A pause, during which SIR JOHN shakes hands and chats with his friends all round, and he and McTAGGART, who meet now for the first time, are mutually introduced.]

Sir John. Well, but, I say, about this Round Table of yours! Can't a set of fellows meet and chaff each other without all this humbugging borrowed machinery of brotherhood, the *Noctes Atticæ*, and such like stuff? Besides,

why 'Round Table' of all things in the world? You know the song telling what came of the Round Table which Sir Simon the King set up, in imitation of Arthur and Merlin, captivated with the form of the thing (as I fear our friend Serious William is), without considering, tipping old fool as he was, what sort of substitutes he had for Arthur's knights to place round the mahogany?

Several Brethren. Who was Sir Simon?

Sir John. Not know Simon, son of Cole, patron of fiddlers? Here he is.

Sir John sings.

Old Sir Simon the King
Was son to Old King Cole :
He kept his Court in merry Cockaigne,
At the sign of the Good Brown Bowl.

A great round table had Simon,
And it stood within his hall ;
There fed knight and peer, and lout to jeer,
And churl to quarrel withal.

There was good Lord Chancellor Lovel,
And a comely man was he,
With a beard as broad as a shovel,
And a voice as loud as three.

There was stout Sir Wilibert Wagstaff,
Who could handle the sword and bow;
When he set to work he could cleave a Turk
In twain at a single blow.

There was choleric Bishop Brosier,
Of Barleymow Abbey the chief;
Who banged his monks with a crozier,
And pelted beggars with beef.

There was fat Sir Gorboduc Griskin,
Who would eat and call for more;
He swore with grief that a baron of beef
Was woundy short commons for four.

There was lean Sir Penury Pinchbeck,
Whose gold was his vital breath;
His steeds were choked with their litter-straw,
And his cooks were starved to death.

Sir Pen was devoured by his own house-rats,

Who could find no food beside :
The Chancellor took a young wife and shaved,
And so caught cold and died.

Sir Wilibert went to the Holy Land,
But the Turks all took to flight ;
So he smote his own head off in a rage
When he found no foe to fight.

Sir Gorboduc died of a peacock-pie,
Having eaten capons three ;
And the good lord Bishop buried them all
With a *benedicite*.

When poor Sir Simon heard of the fate
Of the Knights of his Table Round,
He took to his bed and drank himself dead,
And there his body was found.

Gentlemen, here are six caps. Do they fit?

Mr. McTaggart (to himself). He's a dacent Englishman that ; and a gey strauchtforward man to be a Baronet : I like him. I maun keep up the ba' wi' him noo and than. He'll be frae the Berkshire downs, I think.

[*There ensues another considerable pause, during which the smoking goes on and there is much miscellaneous talk—the Baronet and McTaggart visibly fraternising.*]

Mr. Loftus Smart. Anything new in the Book-World?

Mr. Bidder. The publishing season has hardly begun yet ; and there is no use in going back to the books that everybody has been talking about during the autumn—some capital ones among them, besides the *Idylls*. The new publications in Great Britain for the fortnight ending October 14, are exactly 161 in number—mostly theological, scholastic, medical and technical books, with but few of poetry, history, or philosophy among them. The same rate holding over the whole year would give us 4,196 new publications every year. I believe the correct number is about 5,000 a year of all kinds—somewhat different from the rate two hundred years ago, when

the annual number registered was between 150 and 300, and a reader had some chance of keeping abreast of the tide.

Sir John. Science has had its turn with shooting in the vacation. This year's meeting of the British Association so near Balmoral, and with the Prince present, seems to have been a hit. Some of our intellectual folks have been as far north as Caithness and the Orkneys, tasting Magnus Troil's hospitality, and having interviews with Norma of the Fitful Head; and I hear Aberdeen had a week of extraordinary bustle. Do you know Aberdeen, Mr. McTaggart?

Mr. McTaggart. I dinna belang till't; but I've been in't w'a or three times. It's a splendid town—a' biggit o' gréy granite; and that's the hardest stane there is in the world, except it may be basalt or diamond. If you saw Union Street in Aberdeen in a moonlicht nicht, stretchin' oot sae lang and clear—the houses on baith sides glimmerin' wi' a ghaistly kind o' frostit silver look, because o' the particles o' mica in the granite, and the double row o' gas lamps risin' and fa'in' in a gentle curve for three-quarters o' a mile—you wad say that there was na sic a gran' street in a' Great Britain. And the natives o' the town correspond. Man, you'll see't written down in a' the phrenological books that the Aberdeen folk have the biggest heads in a' the world. The hatters have to mak' hats for Aberdeen on special purpose, three or four sizes beyond what is required for any ither place in Britain. I wad just like to see a cargo o' auld hats frae Aberdeen brocht up to London and clappit on the heads o' the Cockneys. You wad see the craturs rinnin' aboot wud in Cheapside, drooned to their verra shouthers wi' black cylinders, lookin' mair like bits o' auld funnels o' steamers than ony mortal hats you ever saw. To be sure, I've been tauld by ae phrenologist that, though the Aberdeen heads were certainly verra big, they were unfortunately big the wrang way. But he wasna an Aberdeen man; and that, you ken, maks an unco difference. It was a great

shame o' Walter Scott no to lay the scene o' ane o' his novels in Aberdeen. It's an awfu' thing, the jealousy o' the Edinburgh folk.

Serious William. Well, but about the Association. Mr. Bidder, tell us something of the proceedings.

Mr. Bidder. Besides the Presidential addresses, there were 78 papers or communications in the section of Mathematical and Physical Science, 49 in that of Chemistry, 52 in that of Geology, 53 in that of Zoology and Botany, 26 in the subsection of Physiology proper, 36 in the section of Geography and Ethnology, 23 in that of Economic Science and Statistics, and 35 in that of Practical Mechanics.

Mr. McTaggart. Thank ye, Mr. Bidder. I daursay some inference is to be drawn from the numbers and proportions you've gien us; but I canna say that I'm clear what it is. Oot o' sic a quantity o' first-rate cerebration there maun surely hae come a lot o' novelties increasin' man's insicht into nature and strengthenin' his sma grip o' her, the jaud!

Mr. Bidder. I must refer you for that to our friend, Mr. Ernest Newlight, here: he takes note of these things.

Mr. Loftus Smart. Yes; Newlight loves Aurora; Newlight worships the Dawn.

Mr. Ernest Newlight. I do, gentlemen. Nothing is to me more hateful than that Finality mood, that paltry Whiggism of our intellectual world, which clings screaming to the post of the present, refusing to be torn away from it, all the while recognising or pretending to recognise that the whole past progress of humanity has been achieved precisely by a series of reluctant advances from post to post. I see it in the world of politics. I see it in the world of physical science, too; but it is because, if not in all departments, at least in some, men of science *are* open-minded and alert, and because chiefly through the imagined development of the physical sciences I can have visions of a soul-astounding Finality-confounding future, that I take interest in scientific

proceedings and catch at all hints of new inventions, discoveries, and speculations. Man's grip of nature small! Nay, rather, has not man already so conquered what of Nature is nearest to him, so clamped the small earth round with iron and meshed her with telegraphs, that, if his physical dominion is to advance much farther, more than the Earth must be furnished him for the exercise of his art, and there must be some leap some day of Man and Earth together into a sense and a power of interplanetary relations? Yes, I do love Aurora! Yes, I do worship the Dawn!

Mr. Loftus Smart. Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle! the cow jumped over the moon.

Mr. McTaggart. Ay, and the little dog laucht, sir. Gie's your haund, Mr. Newlight. I daursay you're generally wrang; but you're a trump.

[Mr. Newlight, on being farther pressed, gives an account of some of the more memorable proceedings of the British Association meeting, glancing also at the recent meeting of the Social Science Congress. We have full notes of what he said; but, as the matter is very abstruse in parts, and also rather bulky, we suppress them.]

Sir John. I am sure, gentlemen, we are all much obliged to Mr. Newlight for his exposition of these matters; but I wonder that he has omitted one thing, of which I chanced to hear, and which interested me, as a plain unscientific fellow, more than all the rest. There was a paper read in the Chemical section of the Association, I am told, on the modes of rendering fibrous substances non-inflammable; and in the conversation that ensued, the Master of the Mint stated that the investigation of the subject had been at first set about at the wish of her Majesty, who, taking much to heart the frequent accidents to ladies caused by their light dresses taking fire, had some time ago sent her commands [I believe, to himself] that the best means of prevention should be considered and reported on.

Mr. McTaggart. That was raal thoctfu' o' the Queen, noo. It was a sma' act in itsel'; but it was a queenly ane. Some sovereigns that I ken o' are no sae carefu'

about settin' fire to their subjects. Gentlemen, in connexion wi' this, and without prejudicin' our right to fin' faut wi' her Majesty's government, past, present, or future, I propose three cheers for the Queen.

[The three cheers are given by all in grand style; but McTaggart, not satisfied, calls for another, to be given by Sir John and himself, and challenges the Baronet to the trial which shall give it loudest. The Baronet executes a true English cheer, which would have made French or Russians quake; and McTaggart somewhat unfairly defeats him by accompanying his cheer with the wildest fantasies of gesticulation, and prolonging the latter part of it into a most unearthly yell.]

Mr. McTaggart (looking into the jug and finding it empty). It's gettin' late, lads; I think we maun go.

[Coats and hats are resumed; the room is deserted; and the brethren, descending the stairs, stand under the lamp outside the street-door, as the clocks are striking twelve.]

Mr. McTaggart. Gude nicht to ye, gentlemen. *[He stalks off by himself in one direction, and the others walk more slowly in the other.]*

Mr. Bidder. I say, did you observe McTaggart's bow as he took leave of us? I never saw anything like it. There was a stiff flexion forwards of the tall bony body, accompanied with a flourish backwards of the right leg, the whole ending in a kind of pirouette on the left foot, which turned his back to us in a manner singularly expressive of contempt.

Mr. Loftus Smart. He certainly is a queer specimen. Where did you pick him up, William? Where does he hang out?

Serious William. No one has ever been able to find that out. He keeps himself close in that respect; but I meet him in various places about.

Mr. Loftus Smart. Ah! lives in a garret somewhere, I dare say, with copies of John Knox, Burns, and Sir William Hamilton beside him, and a barrel of oatmeal in the corner. Does his own cooking, I should think?

Serious William. I don't know. Some say he is wealthy.

[The footsteps die away in the distance.]